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MAINLY EAST

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

THIRTEEN YEARS OF A BUSY WOMAN'S LIFE

AMERICA AS I SAW IT

MEXICO AS I SAW IT. (*Now in a Shilling Edition. Translated*)

THROUGH FINLAND IN CARTS. (*Now in a Shilling Edition. Translated*)

A GIRL'S RIDE IN ICELAND. (*Now in a Shilling Edition*)

HYDE PARK: Its History and Romance

PORFIRIO DIAZ: The Maker of Modern Mexico. (*Translated*)

A WINTER JAUNT TO NORWAY.

GEORGE HARLEY, F.R.S.; or, The Life of a London Physician. (*Out of print*)

WILTON, Q.C.; or, Life in a Highland Shooting Box. (*Out of print*)

DANISH *VERSUS* ENGLISH BUTTER-MAKING

THE OBER-AMMERGAU PASSION PLAY. (*Out of print*)

SUNNY SICILY.

BEHIND THE FOOTLIGHTS.

BUSY DAYS: A Birthday Book

MY TABLECLOTHS

WOMEN THE WORLD OVER

MEXICO: From Diaz to the Kaiser

WOMEN AND SOLDIERS

A WOMAN ON FOUR BATTLE FRONTS

A BIT OF OLD JERUSALEM

From a Water Colour by Mrs. ALEC TWEEDIE.

MAINLY EAST

(In prose—perhaps prosey)

BY

Mrs. ALEC-TWEEDIE

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COLOURED FRONTISPIECE BY THE AUTHOR
And 52 Illustrations and Map

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CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	—Will you jaunt 50,000 Miles with Me ? . .	1
II.	—The Joy of making Impression Sketches .	10
III.	—Egypt barely out of the War . . .	21
IV.	—Egypt a Year later	41
V.	—Palestine under Military Régime—After War Days	54
VI.	—Life in Indian Palaces—Kapurthala . .	84
VII.	—Crocodile Shooting on the Ganges . .	109
VIII.	—A Great Native State—Gwalior . . .	126
IX.	—A Lighted Match—Athens—Salonika . .	147
X.	—The Dardanelles	159
XI.	—The Middle East aflame—Asia Minor. .	184
XII.	—The Oldest Inhabited City—Damascus . .	199
XIII.	—Baalbec—in the Lebanons	217
XIV.	—Palestine under Civil Rule—and its Future.	234
XV.	—Two Thousand Five Hundred Miles up the White Nile	255
XVI.	—The Greatest Dam in the World . .	275
XVII.	—What will the End of our Jaunt be ? . .	304

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Mrs. Alec-Tweedie . . . . . *Facing p.* 1

"Montrico," a fishing village in Northern Spain. One of the villages where Spanish influenza was supposed to be born. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie . „ 8

Christmas Eve, 1916, in the Leslie Tweedie Memorial Lounge (Shakespeare Hut, London). By F. Matania . . . . . „ 9

Invitation drawn by Mr. Harry Furniss . . . „ 10

The Author astride in the desert . . . . . „ 11

Admiral Sir Percy Scott and Mrs. Alec-Tweedie. Ascot, August, 1922 . . . . . „ 11

"The Rialto and Venetian market boats." From a water-colour sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie . . „ 20

A corner of old Cairo. From a water-colour by Mrs. Tweedie . . . . . „ 21

Outside a mosque, Cairo. From a water-colour by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie . . . . . „ 21

Philæ Temple, Assouan. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie in possession of Mr. Edwin Tate . . „ 50

The Bond Street of Kosti, 2,000 miles up the White Nile, Southern Sudan. The natives live in these "Turkls." From a water-colour sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie, in the possession of Mrs. Miles Kennedy . . . „ 51

Plaintiffs waiting for the Court to open at Kosti, White Nile, Sudan . . . . . „ 51

The Sud. Hundreds of square miles of Pampas grass, Central Sudan. Photo by the Author. *See page* 269 „ 51

"The Kaiser and Kaiserin" (about 15 feet big), on the ceiling, among the prophets, of the fine Byzantine Church, and near The Christ over the Altar. The Palace adjoining is now Government House. It stands on the top of the Mount of Olives at Jerusalem. I stayed there a week with General Sir Louis Bols when it was O.E.T.A. (H.Q.). Photo by Lieut. Mirehouse, Prince of Wales Volunteers . . . „ 54

Delhi at night. Crossing the Jumna. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie, in possession of Mrs. Cozens Brooke . . . . . „ 55

A snake charmer. Photo by the Author. *See Chap. VIII.* . . . . . „ 55

The taxi of India. Photo by the Author. *See Chap. VIII.* . . . . . „ 55

The Great French Palace of H.H. The Maharajah of Kapurthala, Punjab . . . . . „ 102

Amritsar, "Julianwallah Bagh," Punjab, where 370 rebels were shot after warning against riotous meetings, 1919. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie . . „ 103

"Gwalior Fort" (Central India). At sundown all Indians cook their own food in little pots, and the soft rising smoke makes the scene look like water or mist. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie, in possession of Viscountess Chelmsford. *See page* 141 . . . „ 108

"Crocodile shooting on the Ganges." From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie . . . . . „ 109

Mohammedan Turkish priest at Salonika . . . „ 146

A Greek at Athens. From a photo by the Author . . *Facing p.* 147
Turkish boatman, Tripoli, in Asia Minor. From a photo by the Author . . . . . „ 147
Jews loading a ship at Salonika. From a photo by the Author . . . . . „ 147
A corner in the Middle East . . . . . „ 158
Dardanelles boats. Photo by the Author . . . „ 159
A priest. Photo by the Author . . . . . „ 159
Greek refugees. Photo by the Author . . . . . „ 159
Two hundred Greeks came on board. They had been "rescued by the British from the Turks in the Dardanelles." They hated their own countrymen in Salonika, and paid their own fares to go back to the Turks, and were left at Gallipoli. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie . . . . . „ 164
Turkish women packing figs in Smyrna—which was Greek in 1920. Sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie finished in an earthquake. *See page* 192 . . „ 164
The Dardanelles, from a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie, now in The Imperial War Museum, signed by Gen. Ian Hamilton, Admiral de Robeck and Admiral Roger Keyes . . . . . „ 165
Armenian refugees, Asia Minor. From a photo by the Author . . . . . „ 196
A corner of Smyrna. From a photo by the Author . „ 196
Thirteen-year-old Armenian mother and her baby. From a photo by the Author . . . . . „ 196
An Armenian refugee. From photo by the Author . „ 197
Syrian policeman at Lebanons Station. From a photo by the Author . . . . . „ 198
Entrance to Great Mosque, Damascus. From a photo by the Author . . . . . „ 198
Inside courtyard of Great Mosque, Damascus. From a photo by the Author . . . . . „ 198
Our French guard from Damascus to the Palestine frontier. From a sketch by the Author . . „ 199
Two Druze women in Trans-Jordania. From a sketch by the Author . . . . . „ 199
"Blue and Silver Virgin," bombed by Bolsheviks at the door of the Seville Cathedral, Holy Week, 1919, just as her altar was being carried in to be blessed. Water colour by the Author. *See page* 145 . . . „ 216
A couple of Bedouins outside the Mosque of Acca, Palestine, from which Joan of Arc takes her name. Sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie . . . . . „ 217
Two Palestinian women outside the walls of Jericho. Sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie . . . . . „ 217
The Ash Wedding dance. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie. In possession of Mrs. Chalmers . . „ 260
2,500 miles up the Nile, beyond Fashoda. Sudan Dinkas, Shelluks, Sennusi, and other tribes. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie. In possession of H.E. The Sirdar . . . . . „ 260
Shelluks; Seven feet high; Dinka. 2,500 miles up the Nile. From photos by the Author . . . „ 261
Making the greatest Dam in the world—Sennar, on the Blue Nile, Sudan . . . . . „ 302
Fashoda, on the White Nile, now called Kodok. From a photo by the Author . . . . . „ 303
Cutting wood, Erredeba Forest, Blue Nile, Sudan. From a photo by the Author . . . . . „ 303

Photo by] [*Vandyk.*

Mrs. Alec-Tweedie

[*To face Chapter* 1.

MAINLY EAST

CHAPTER I

WILL YOU JAUNT 50,000 MILES WITH ME ?

WILL you take a little jaunt with me, unknown friend—you see, I take it for granted you are a friend. So let us go a jaunt together.

Please understand right away, I'm no "gentleman with a duster" or a "mirror," nor am I a "gentleman" at all; nor, being a woman, has every man I have ever met been violently in love with me, or twice as many as I have ever met proposed to me. All these items you can find in previous volumes by other people. I'm just an ordinary sort of person who ran away from war surroundings, and myself, in January, 1919, when the word "Armistice" was quite newly on everyone's tongue.

Will you jaunt along some 50,000 miles with me, mainly East, and into war zones ?

Sometimes we shall live in hovels, sometimes in palaces, sometimes travel in great ocean steamers, and sometimes on river barges; sometimes on a camel, an elephant, a horse or even the humble moke, because when we set forth for any given

place we must just get there, no matter by what means of procedure.

I hope it won't take you as long as it took me, for I was wandering for two years and four months, and if this book takes all that time to read, the waste paper basket will be its proper receptacle.

It was January, 1919. War was over, the Armistice had been signed, and the Peace Treaty was still five or six months off when I elected to start.

A tired woman who had done a bit of war work, had had two sons in " it " from the very beginning, one of whom was killed in 1916, I packed up my traps and started out on this long trail—alone !

I shan't take you all the way, new friend, because you might get tired of me, so we will drop out my first trip from London across France, the Pyrenees, through Spain to Seville and Granada.

Then we will drop out 999 miles in staff cars along the battle-fields of France and Flanders from Verdun to Zeebrugge, and we will start afresh in Egypt.

Let us wander together in the Middle East in the order in which I did the trip. Egypt, Palestine, India, then home for a cure at Aix les Bains, and an after-cure in Savoie and Chamonix shall be omitted—and we will join forces again at Venice and wander round the Greek Islands to Salonica, the Dardanelles, Constantinople and Smyrna, turning south to Syria, Palestine and Egypt again, and then down to Southern Sudan in Central Africa. Rather like the cross on a hot-

cross bun. On the map it makes a very uneven, unruly sort of a cross, but so it was. From Spain in the West to the Himalayas in the East. From the Bosphorus in the North to Rajaf in the South.

And now we are off. I hope you're not off in another direction, already depressed at the prospect of our jaunt together.

I'm not going to bore you by telling you about the very painful circumstances of my birth. Sufficient to say I came into this world, being a precocious infant, too soon, and being less than six lbs. in weight I had to be rolled up in a blanket, or, maybe, a shawl. I cannot quite remember which, but anyway, I had to continue rolled up in something until I grew up sufficiently to get into the ordinary baby clothes that had been prepared for me with such stupendous care by a brilliant mother's nimble fingers.

So you see I did everything wrong from the very beginning, and started life in an unexpected way. Somehow I seem to have gone on in much the same unusual channels of unexpectedness ever since, and I may go on doing foolish things until my ashes repose in a nice little urn, and my remains and my foibles are out of harm's way.

The wandering spirit must have descended from the days of Captain Cook, who, on his first trip round the world, was accompanied by a certain gentleman named Captain Denham, and that certain gentleman was my great-, great-, great-uncle on my mother's side, but, being of Scottish descent, on my father's side (the Haddington tomb-stone dates from 1501), I ought

to say " grand-grand-grand " not great-great-great —methinks.

On a huge statue near the Admiralty Arch in Whitehall one reads the following inscription :

" Captain James Cook, R.N., F.R.S. Born 1728, circumnavigator of the Globe, explorer of the Pacific Ocean. He laid the foundations of the British Empire in Australia and New Zealand. Unveiled by H.R.H. Prince Arthur of Connaught on behalf of the British Empire League. 7th July, 1914."

And now a new war seems looming in the Middle East you and I will have a look upon the scenes before the war bombs really burst, and when only occasional shots were flying over my head.

" What is this new war all about ? " asks the man in the street.

" Everything and nothing," replies the woman with the pen.

The half educated and totally uneducated people of the East and Middle East, with their religions and castes, superstitions and dishonesty, and disloyalty to one another, have been roused, and it will take a century before they all settle down again ; meantime, bloodshed, famine and disease are about ; and in some countries like Russia, the population has dwindled to almost one-half through war and annexation and famine.

" And why this strife originally ? " again asks the man in the street.

" Because the world was over-populated," replies

the woman with the pen. " There was not enough food to go round. Starvation means war, and ever will mean war. War is the natural instinct for self preservation. Horrible but true."

When the Great War ended, I couldn't sit still with folded hands, could I ? That to a woman of action would have driven me mad. One cannot fight sorrow with folded hands. Like others, I didn't know how terribly I had felt the strain of two sons at the Front in those first awful years —of Zepps overhead, or my own war work—until the strain ended. Then I knew that I should either sit down and play Bridge and knit, grow old and dull and stupid doing nothing, or I must give myself a mental, moral and physical shake and start a new life.

But where to go and what to do was the question. Being blessed with a wonderful and adorable mother, she stepped in and solved the problem.

" My dear," she said solemnly, when I was wondering what to do, " if you don't do something, you will crack. Go away to Spain. That country has not been troubled by the war." (My surviving son had just been sent to a Staff job in India). " You are quite alone. Go. You painted very nicely when you were a little girl. Go and paint."

" Paint ! Why, mother, I haven't painted since I *was* a little girl, and I never even learned how to paint then."

" Never mind, dear, go and try."

Still I hesitated. Several times she returned to

the charge. I felt a brute, but firmly refused. The idea seemed ridiculous.

"Well," she persisted, "as you seem so reluctant to go away or do anything at all, why not—just to please me—spend a sovereign on some paints. If you fail, you will have lost exactly twenty shillings; if you succeed, you may live to bless your old mother. Go away and try."

Still I hesitated. I was too jaded to move. But she persisted.

A wonderful wife, a perfect mother, a house-proud woman, and withal, her greatest charm was her unfailing sympathy. Anyone can find fault; it is the easiest way of showing, or attempting to show, one's superiority. Sympathy more often helps one to achieve success. She lived for others; the mainspring of many lives, and she retained her interest in everyone and everything. She was the mainstay of her husband's home (Dr. George Harley, F.R.S., of Harley Street); she was the incentive from which her children worked, and but for her, you and I would not have gone this jaunt together.

And so through the persistency of a dear, wise old mother I started for Spain, intending the holiday to last a couple of months.

San Sebastian was a former haunt of hers and mine, and we had old friends there, so I attached paper, paint and brush, and muddled, and got disheartened and muddled again; but still went on.

She had asked me to. She was waiting for the result.

About a fortnight went by. I had worked very hard, and at the same time enjoyed the extraordinary spectacle of shops and restaurants full of food, and butter and cheese, and tomatoes, and bananas, and even cakes, all of which luxuries were almost unknown in London during the last two years of the war.

One particular Sunday in March, 1919, in a Spanish fishing village, I was unutterably miserable, and woke up in a cold perspiration, feeling that something was very wrong. All the morning I struggled with the depression, so that a little friend who was with me might not guess how utterly overpowered I was by a strange feeling of fear.

I tried to paint; but I could not paint. I tried to write; but I could not write. A curious premonition of something horrible was upon me.

Always being extremely psychic, and never wishing to give way to that dangerous power, I struggled to put it behind me; but it was no good; I could do nothing. My brain was on fire and yet I felt numb.

At last the brilliant idea seized me that I would bestir myself and get busy, that I would collect the few little sketches I had made at San Sebastian since leaving London a fortnight before, and put them up neatly into a parcel and post them off to my old mother, who had inspired the work, and was waiting—waiting to see it develop.

As it was Sunday I could not register the wretched parcel, though somehow I felt the importance of getting it off at once. So I wrote

the name on the back of each sketch, tied them respectfully up in brown paper, sealed them with care, addressed them, and then laid them upon the table. They were ready to send home for the old lady to see, so that she might enjoy the pleasure of looking at the places we had visited together some fifteen years before, and the recollection of these visits would please her whether the sketches were good, bad or indifferent. They were done for her, and I felt better.

The irritation that day of not being able to get them off to her by wireless was horrible; but I felt better.

Later my friend and I had our *déjeuner* early together. I was a horrible companion, although she was kind enough not to say so. We collected our traps and by twelve o'clock marched up the hill to paint.

When we were half-way up that Pyrenian side I made the excuse that I wanted to paint, and from there. I really wanted to be alone. She trudged up the hill to get a better view and left me. There I sat (I can see the spot now) on a rocky boulder overlooking the broad Atlantic, peering across its blue waters to the West, when that horrible feeling with which I had awakened in the morning came upon me again.

A couple of hours later my companion returned, and was somewhat amazed and amused to find I had done nothing, but was still sitting with my paper idly before me, still gazing out to sea.

The next few days were more tranquil, but oh, how I longed for letters from home. Not, however,

"Montrico," a fishing village in Northern Spain. One of the villages where Spanish influenza was supposed to be born. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie.

[*To face p.* 8.

Christmas Eve, 1916, in the Leslie Tweedie Memorial Lounge (Shakespeare Hut, London). By F. Matania.

(The author collected money to put up 40 Y.M.C.A. Huts.)

till the following Thursday afternoon was a wire put in my hand in that fishing village of Montrico, in Northern Spain, to tell me that my dear old mother had passed away at one o'clock that March Sunday.

She never saw the pictures which she had inspired.

I left her well less than three weeks before, but the war and 'flu had played their part. A merciful release after years of suffering from rheumatism and arthritis. To me, though it was an irreparable loss, I have never wished her back: she had suffered too much. But, oh, the void her passing has left.

Another horrible tragedy in my life.

Practically I had written to her every day for fifteen years, or sent her some letters or cuttings or papers. I had generally spent every Sunday with her for all that time, unless abroad, and during those long years of war, every Sunday. It really seemed as if the last links with England and home had been snapped. Why return ?

In three years I had been deprived of a son and a mother, two people whom I dearly loved, and only those in like positions can realize what that means.

England was no home for me after that; and so, after telling you why I started to wander, will you come along with me and see whither those wanderings led ?

CHAPTER II

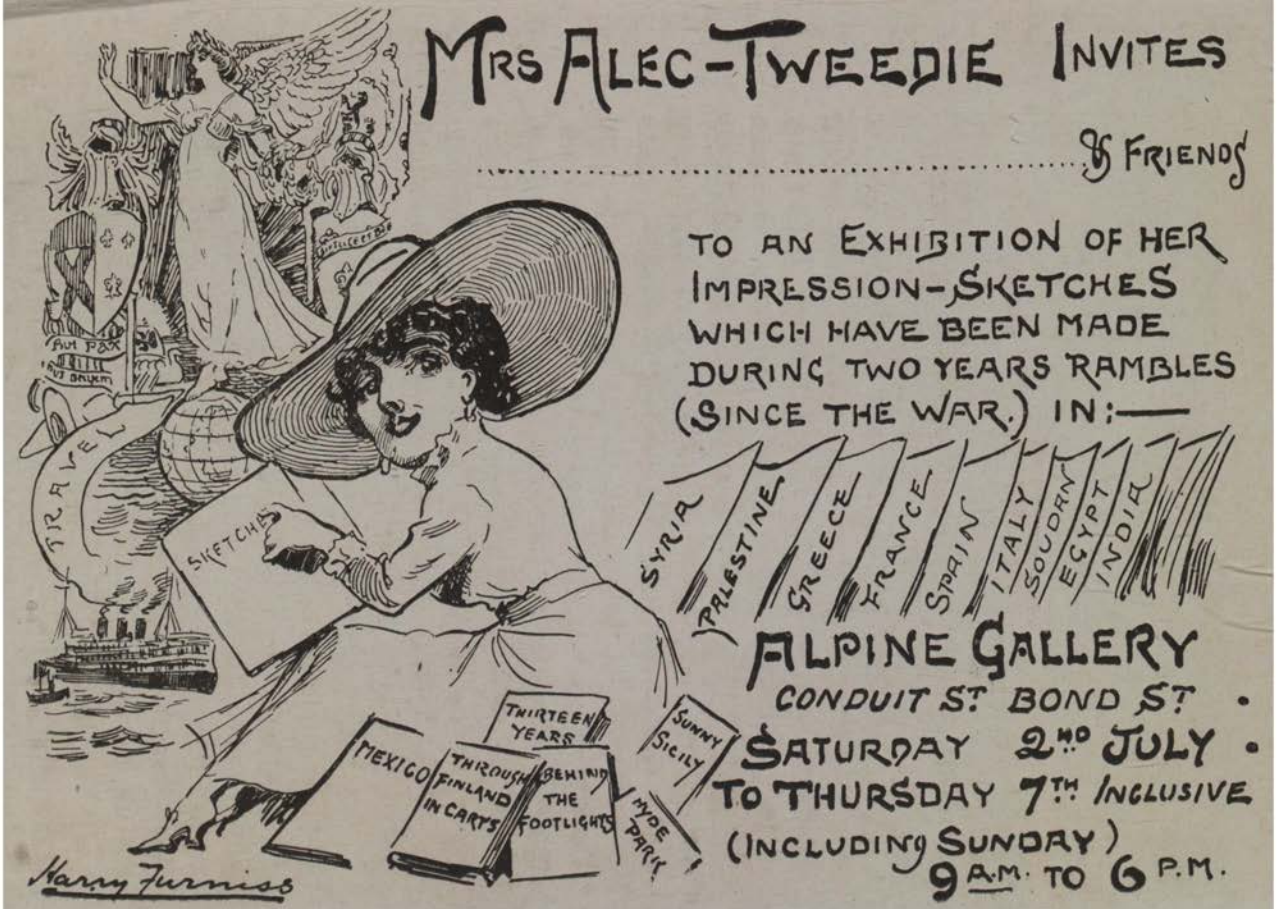
THE JOY OF MAKING IMPRESSION SKETCHES

AS I began writing without learning how to write, so I began painting without having learned how to paint. I didn't know I had any sense of colour until I began to daub. I mean to go on now, because paints have brought new happiness and solace into my present-day lonely life. And if anyone who reads these pages wants a new joy, let them buy paints and brushes and boldly start. It's an amazing joy—one forgets time. One forgets luncheon hours or tea times, or even dinner bells; one forgets everything; one forgets the world and forgets oneself, as little by little things begin to appear on the white paper and take form and colour.

Nothing one can write can impress the mind so vividly as the eye can be impressed by a picture. The earliest form of writing was picture writing, and we are rapidly going back to that with illustrated newspapers and cinemas. Perhaps we shall soon forget how to read, and then no more books will be wanted.

It was impossible to write a book on countries in the Melting Pot, 'twixt Peace and War.

Many of the places I visited did not even know



Invitation drawn by Mr. Harry Furniss.

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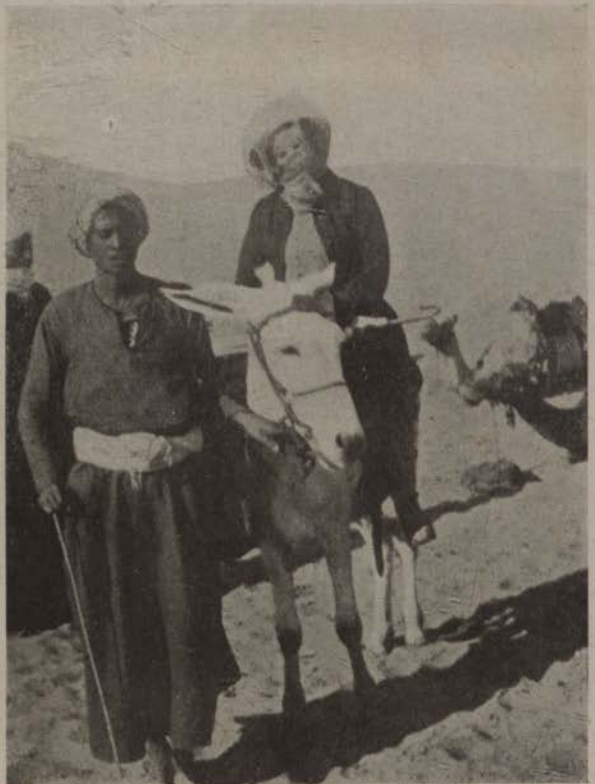


The Author astride in the Desert.

Photo by] [*Miss Grainger Kerr.*

Admiral Sir Percy Scott and Mrs. Alec Tweedie
Ascot, Aug. 1922.

to whom they belonged; one day Greek or Italian, French, Turkish or British, and the next morning all changed—verily a geographical kaleidoscope. History and geography in the re-making—soldiers, aeroplanes and gunboats everywhere.

As it was impossible, therefore, to write a book, I turned from the pen to the brush, and the result was the Impression-Sketches of a Woman Writer's rambles over thousands of miles between the Armistice and April, 1921, finally exhibited at the Alpine Gallery (Bond Street) in July, 1921.

They were sketched anywhere and anyhow, and with only four brushes. And the circumstances were sometimes wild and wonderful. Sketched from the top of an elephant in India; from the back of a camel in Syria; astride a donkey in Egypt; from the queer wooden bench of a bullock wagon, or the comfortable cushions of a motor car. From private saloon coaches to third-class windowless war carriages; from splendid steamers to dirty barges; from luxurious palaces to tiny tents, or from straw tukls in Southern Sudan—sketched sometimes in awful heat, blinding dust storms, or in the cool of a glorious Eastern night. And mosquitoes withal in myriads, and sand flies in multitudes.

But a little camp-stool that cost one shilling and eleven pence was my happiest seat, my knees my table, and the swarthy admirers who stood or pushed or fought to see the results, half smothering me with their attentions, were merely "an item" of sundry difficulties attendant on reproducing one's impressions of the East, where shots were

sometimes heard, and martial law oft-time prevailed; for war in the East and Middle East was not over then and is not over now.

Don't let the sketches bore you, only, you see, but for the desire to learn to paint, and I really did work hard, I might never have wandered so far, and you and I might never have been introduced.

Somehow I had often felt that water-colour pictures were more water than colour—so I determined that mine should be more colour than water —or else plain paper.

And the paper. Ah! no one, probably, has ever had recourse to so many queer papers. After the war there was a paper famine, so any sort or kind had to be used, from grocer's blue to the one piece of brown paper available in Delhi—capital of India—a piece of brown paper that only diligent search and bribes could procure. My own bearer ironed it and I painted on it. Two more sheets brought into requisition were the mounts of a Rajah's photograph!

Not framed, nor even mounted. Frames and mounts are expensive matters, and the sketches had to be exhibited without the advantages of either; in the rough and tumble, just as they were done.

Everyone cannot paint a good picture, nor can everyone afford to buy a good picture, but if our British skies are grey, our homes can be decorated with flashes of bright colour. There are pictures as pictures, and decorations as decorations. I can merely claim to be a decorator with a brilliant paint box.

* * * * *

Personally, I rarely met a highly educated man or woman in India, Palestine, Egypt, or the Sudan, who wanted the British to leave, and who did not acknowledge that their countries were still unable to rule themselves. In Smyrna, Corfu, Cyprus, Constantinople, Salonica—everywhere—they had kindly things to say of the British who had barely left their shores.

Let us God-father these lands, *provided they pay their own way*—but don't let us spoon-feed them with our golden sovereigns, of which I have lately seen so many in the Middle East. The East and Middle East are to-day run by Jews (all honour to them for getting into such high places). Palestine is becoming Jewish and German. I say "becoming" advisedly, because, of course, the Arabs far outnumber everyone else.

The new postage stamp has *Palestine* across it in Arabic,

Palestine in English, and Arabic, and

Land of Israel in Hebrew.

This latter phrase is resented by the Arab population, which is ninety-three per cent. of the whole.

There are tens of thousands of Arabs in the Middle East. They are all of one religion; yes, but they are not all of one point of view.

Palestine is not productive, and cannot be for many years, but is British money to plant the trees and make the roads and run the show? Is it worth it? I think not.

The Red Flag has waved in Jaffa. A sort of Jewish Parliament was inaugurated in Jerusalem

in October, 1920. Is this to be the Central Jewish organization of the world? More anon.

* * * * *

Mr. Richard Whiteing, author of *No. 9 John Street*, in the *English Review* for March, 1921, under the title "*The Will to Art*," said:

> "The will to do a thing is mainly a force in itself; and it would be reckoned so but for its misuse as a shibboleth by some of its friends. It can have no place in those fashionable philosophies that have their rise in the drawing-room, and their end in the dustbin . . . .
>
> "Mrs. Alec Tweedie's book on her journey to Mexico was a case in point. . . .
>
> "Now has come a new craving, but only 'to date.' Her pen has served her well—why not show what she can do with the brush? . . . .
>
> "Her friend, Dame Genevieve Ward, has had much to do with this resolve. 'Yours has been the most fruitfully busy life I know,' Miss Ward wrote in her Memoirs. It was no empty compliment. . . . .
>
> "For the last two years Mrs. Alec Tweedie has been on a world pilgrimage, if not exactly from China to Peru, certainly from Spain as a starting point to India as the goal, by way of France, Italy, Greece, Palestine, Syria, India, Sudan and the Nile. Some three or four hundred sketches are the result. The case is before the public for a verdict. My

own impression is that it will be favourable. The artist has the secret, which is to think in colour, and let the form take care of itself. This is what we all do in the actual visualization of things. Persons and scenes are realized as colour schemes, not as outline schemes, merely filled in. A Spanish cathedral—everything, in fact, in Spain—expresses itself in that way, the religion especially. A great religious service is emotion rendered in the terms of colour. This is why it soon transcends the limits of the edifice, and takes to the open street. The banners are a colour, the vestments of the priests another, the crowds the same, the flame of the tapers one more. The outlines as such are quite elusive; the whole is a blended mass of great primaries in red or orange, violet or blue, and the rest of it, seen in the drawing, just as it is seen in life. So with the Indian collection on the like principle. The true artist is the 'colour-intoxicated' man, as Spinoza, in a happy characterization, was said to be the 'religion-intoxicated' one. Both turn instinctively to light. Hence the new art which has taken the modern artist out of his studio into the open air, never to return to the tricks of the folded curtain, or the meagre infiltration of rays from chinks in the roof. The method is still on its trial, to be sure; but I shall be greatly surprised if this collection does not carry it another step forward on its triumphant way."

* * * * *

Mainly East

The following letter, written December 12th, 1920, is from H.E. the High Commissioner of Egypt, Field-Marshal Viscount Allenby, who, with British soldiers, conquered Syria (now French) and Palestine (now Jewish), and knows every inch of both countries, as well as Egypt and the Sudan:

> "I very much enjoyed seeing your paintings yesterday. You certainly have reproduced in them both the spirit and colour of these countries.
>
> "I hope you will enjoy Luxor and the Sudan.
>
> "Yours sincerely,
>
> "ALLENBY."

Conceit, nothing but conceit has made me put the above quotations here; but they were the reward of work, and work only. One may inherit good looks or bad, much brain or little, small hands or large, short sight or good. One may inherit natural refinement or vulgarity, but weighed against all this, if one-third of one's character is heredity, another third the result of environment, the last third is what one does for oneself, and the three can only be co-ordinated to success through work, and nothing but work.

No gifts are any good unless they are made adequate use of, and it is a sad thing to remember in life that everything that does not progress goes backwards. The clock of existence will not stand still. Others are always pushing from behind, so unless one keeps up to date and abreast of the times, and does one's share, or more than one's

share in one's environment, gradually, slowly, but surely, one slips back into the ordinary ruck.

Hence comes despair and joylessness. But don't let us moralize. Tired or ill I still plodded on with the brush—to please the old lady who inspired the idea—because one does one's best for those one loves, whether they are with us or have passed on, and the reward came. It brought joy in the doing. And the world was kind. Conceit again makes me show you, companion or friend, how kind.

MRS. ALEC-TWEEDIE'S IMPRESSION SKETCHES

PRESS EXTRACTS, JULY, 1921

Mrs. Alec-Tweedie started to paint shortly after the Armistice in November, 1919, and returned to London in the spring of 1921. She travelled 50,000 miles in the two years through Egypt, Sudan, Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Syria, Palestine, and India. Three hundred Impression Sketches were exhibited at the Alpine Gallery, London, July, 1921.

Below are a few extracts from the Press :—

The Times.—" Theories of artistic education dwindle before Mrs. Alec-Tweedie's impetuous method. Having written 20 books of travel in 20 years, she thought it would be a change to combine a little painting with a little more seeing of the world. . . . As a tropical survey, the work of one hand, this large collection is a considerable achievement. . . . Most of the pictures have some unusual association." . . . (and so on for 10 inches of space.)

The Observer (P. G. Konody).—" Her industry is only rivalled by her enthusiasm. . . . Her work has a spontaneous breadth and freshness of vision that augur well for the future, should she decide definitely to exchange the pen for the brush. . . . With reservation her sketches of Egypt, Palestine, Syria, the Sudan, India, Spain, Italy and Savoie are of great historical, topographical and ethnological interest."

Daily News.—" Fine water colours."

Mainly East

Near East.—"Mrs. Alec-Tweedie turns her intelligent and elliptical pen to politics. . . . Her talent has enabled her to retain the vividness of the scene she has depicted; and her general management of colour is happy. Curiously enough it is not in the Near Eastern subjects, which assuredly she knows as well as may be, that one feels her power most strongly; it is rather in a poetic visualization like 'Pallanza at Night' or in the realistic beauty of the 'Hernani Wine-shop' that talent is merged in genius, that the impression of things seen becomes an interpretation of things experienced. Her work, as we have indicated, is unequal; consider, for instance, her somewhat unconvincing architecture with her boldly successful treatment of the sea. But in all her sketches there is undeniable interest, and this exhibition has once more proved the astonishing, perhaps unparalleled, versatility of Mrs. Alec-Tweedie."

Morning Post.—"Mrs. Alec-Tweedie has given many proofs of her cleverness with the pen, and her exhibition now proves her to have a natural talent with the brush. . . . As impressions, particularly impressions of colour, they are frequently vivid and energetic. A keen, curious observer, with the writer's instinct where to look highly developed, has certainly discovered a natural turn for recording the results with the brush. And the result is that where she is working well within her natural powers, Mrs. Alec-Tweedie produces drawings that technically, as well as emotionally, are quite adequate, and sometimes excellent. A little 'Evening, near Luxor' on the screen may be cited in illustration of the charm and completeness these drawings can display. 'Thebes (Tombs of the Pharaohs) and the Libyan Hills' and the 'Verdun' close by it, are others, and there are many more.'"

Evening Standard.—"I had a look in at the 'Impressions' of Mrs. Alec-Tweedie's bustling brush at the Alpine Gallery. . . . She fairly sweeps round, picking up local colour as she goes. Prodigious! The directness of her sketches is their justification. They have colour and movement of life, and they convey the swift comments of an active mind."

Daily Telegraph—"The sight of them at the Alpine Gallery brings an instant sense of gusto. These colour notes are often crude and hurried; but there is never boredom. The thing seen has not been a task, but an enjoyment. The obvious sincerity has triumphed over many obstacles. . . . Her self-instruction has indeed carried her far, aided by her acknowledged gifts of observation and temperament. There is no

fluking to success in such capable colour work as 'Bazaar Via Dolorosa,' or the compelling scene of a Franciscan Service in the 'Church of the Holy Sepulchre.'"

The Referee.—"The Queen has taken a great interest in these sketches, and a number of them went to Buckingham Palace for Her Majesty's inspection."

Of course, the Art critics might have jumped badly on a writer turning her coat; but the Art critics were as generous as the book reviewers had been, and again, one got far more than one deserved.

We all know our own limitations better than anyone else, and we all know how miserably we fall short of what we should like to accomplish. But nothing could have been more exciting than to learn to paint day by day. There seemed to be as many ways of painting a picture as of trimming a hat. Sometimes the pen-woman was absolutely baffled and in despair, another day in a seventh heaven of delight because something had really come off. If you, my friend, have not tried to paint, go and spend twenty shillings on colours and begin quickly; you will revel in it, and perchance bless me just as I bless the mother who inspired it.

Knowing nothing, one naturally boldly attempted everything.

There is always somebody ready to ask a question, and it really seemed as if I have been asked hundreds of times why I painted in water-colours instead of in oils.

Had I painted in oils, I should have been asked a hundred times why I had not painted in water-colours.

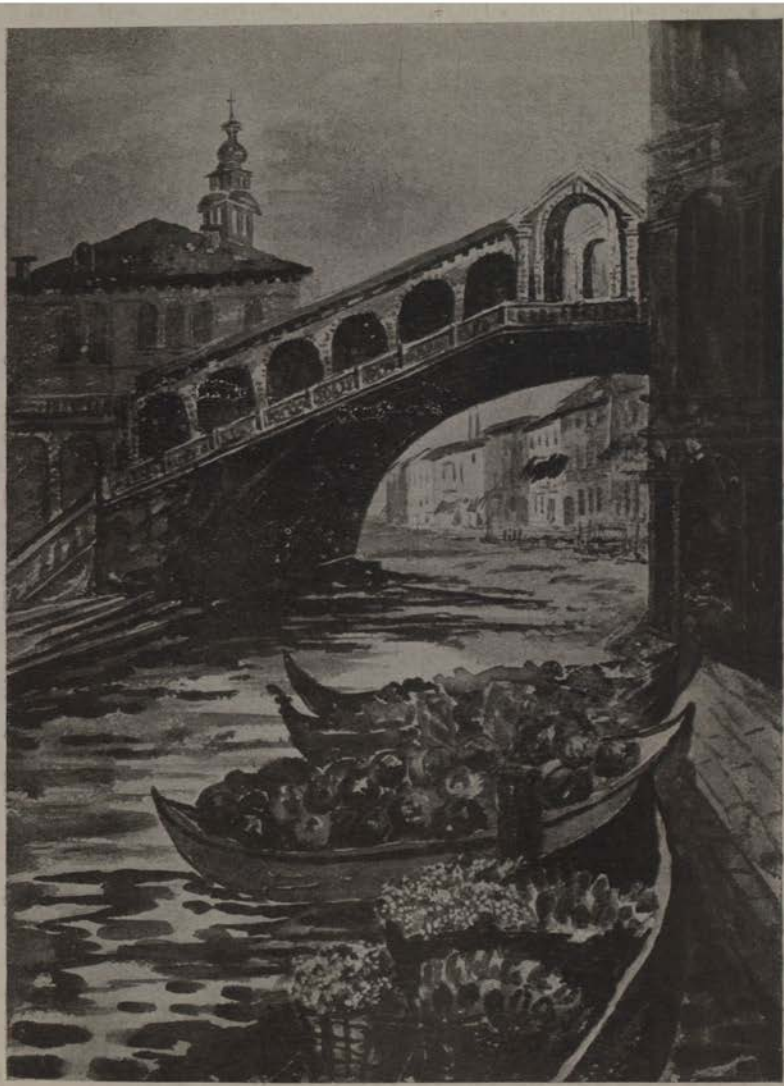
The reason I did it with water is simple. Less paraphernalia is required. One block will hold twenty pages instead of the same amount of space being required for one oil canvas; less bulk of paint is necessary; less bulk of brush; water is easier carried about than turpentine, and, therefore, the water-colour has all the advantage of simplicity.

There its virtue stops, because it is undeniably far more difficult to paint in acquarelle than in oil. In the first, the colour must be put on at once, the high lights must be left, and there must be no muddling about to find results. In the second, the same canvas can be painted over and over again; new lights can be put on at the last moment, and the muddling-about process in no way deteriorates from the result.

But no matter the medium, the joy is the doing. The total absorption; the obliteration of everything else; the being alone oneself with one's own creation; the selfish delight of attainment—all bring real joy, real distraction, real peace.

Do try.

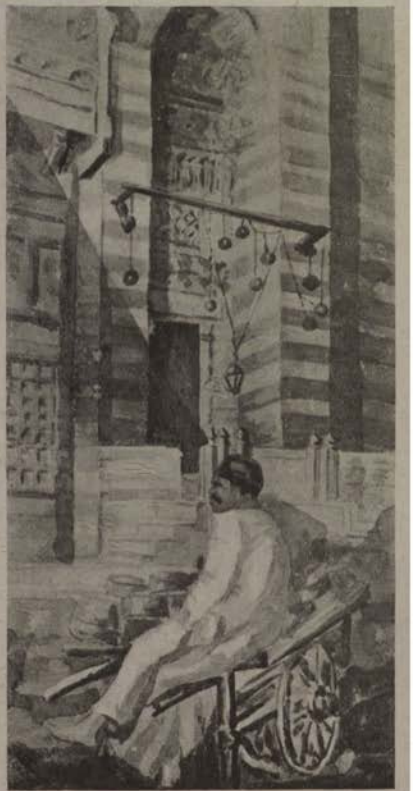
Persistency and dogged determination are rewarded in most things.



"The Rialto and Venetian market boats." From a water colour sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie

[*To face p.* 9.

A corner of old Cairo.



Outside a mosque, Cairo.

From water-colours by Mrs Alec-Tweedie

CHAPTER III

EGYPT BARELY OUT OF THE WAR

IT so happened that Lord Allenby gave a gorgeous dinner-party in Cairo to the Egyptian Cabinet the day after Christmas, 1919. It was the first thing of its kind that had been given since the war, and was altogether a memorable event.

The Residency in Cairo is a fine building in a fine garden on the banks of the Nile. It has known varied and brilliant occupiers, for here lived Lord Cromer in the days of his glory in Egypt, when he did so much for the country. Here also lived Lord Kitchener, who again, in the zenith of his power, was one of the greatest assets the British Empire has ever known. And here lives Lord Allenby, whose reputation has perhaps attained a higher level, and remained there, than any other great general of the World War. Some men are born to rule and to direct others.

At this dinner, Lady Allenby exercised her usual wonderful power as a hostess by remembering the names of every one of those Egyptian gentlemen without ever referring to a note, and introduced them by their full titles.

When we went in to dinner, Lady Allenby took the Prime Minister of Egypt, a delightful old gentleman who spoke very good French, and he sat on her left-hand side. I was placed on his other side, and beyond me was Major-General Sir Louis Bols, who had been Chief of Staff to Lord Allenby both in France and in the Middle East during all his great campaigns, and had just been made Head of the Palestinian Administration.

It is the custom at the Residency for the High Commissioner and his spouse to occupy different sides of the table, so that Lord Allenby was placed opposite his wife, and therefore, almost immediately opposite to me.

The dinner proceeded. There were about forty people present, nearly all men, and the whole thing was extremely official. British officers were still in khaki or blue, and many were covered with decorations.

After the dinner was over, Lord Allenby got up and proposed the health of the King, then rose again and solemnly proposed the health of the Sultan.

Hearing a noise as he put his glass down, he looked across the flowers and silver. He looked again, and seeing a struggle below the boards, with difficulty restrained his laughter, for lo! and behold! I, the scribbler of these jottings from memory, had disappeared under the table.

I had sat on the floor. This sounds terribly bad for a scribe who is almost a teetotaler.

Immediately the poor Egyptian Prime Minister, in great consternation, tried to assist me from my

humiliating position, expressing his desolation in voluble French, while General Sir Louis Bols tried to haul me up on the other. He was even more covered with confusion and sorrow at the situation than my amused self.

Lord Allenby's laughter quickly turned to anxiety as he saw the struggle and he called, across the table: "Good God, I hope she isn't hurt."

I was not hurt, and merely laughing so heartily that it was difficult to regain either my composure or my feet.

What had happened was this. At an official dinner in Cairo it is the custom to leave the dining-table as soon as the Sultan's health has been honoured. This being my first official dinner, though by no means the first time I had enjoyed the Allenbys' delightful hospitality, I did not know the custom, and, thinking we were all to sit down on our seats as we had done after the King's health, I had proceeded to sit down—on nothing.

Poor General Bols, being accustomed to these functions, had most graciously and politely removed my chair to make it the easier for me to leave the dining-table, but had forgotten to say that the Prime Minister would offer me his arm and solemnly lead me from the room to the drawing-room the moment the Sultan's health had been officially drunk.

Hence the disappearance of poor me under the table at an official banquet in Cairo.

As my exalted partner and I proceeded solemnly

through the long corridors to the big drawing-room, I suddenly realized that I was still holding in my hand one of the serviettes, clutched at, doubtless, in a moment of agony, and as the corridor was lined with stalwart servants in gorgeous attire, I handed the serviette to one of them, although unable to speak to him in his native language.

The company had been amused by my exit beneath the mahogany, but I was far more amused at the amazed dignity and horror with which this stately Arab received that serviette. His disdain expressed an absolute contempt for an English woman daring to purloin the High Commissioner's linen.

When Lord Allenby joined the party in the drawing-room, he immediately came across to inquire if I was hurt.

"Not so much hurt," I replied, "as your unfortunate decoration, which has been dangling in jeopardy all through dinner."

"Ah!" he said, "this is the new decoration the Sultan gave me for Christmas, and I felt I must put it on to-night with all these officials; but, as no place had been arranged for it on my tunic, it had to be attached at the last moment by a safety-pin. I hope you did not see the safety-pin."

"I saw nothing else," I wickedly replied. "It must have been the enormity of that wonderful decoration dangling on the breast of an exalted general that upset me so much that I sat on the carpet."

Egypt Barely out of the War

To say Allenby is a strong man is a platitude. Huge of build, humorous by nature, artistic by temperament, he made his name in the Great War and is one of the few men who retained it. And withal he remains extremely modest, and always assures everyone that his success in Cairo is entirely due to his wife.

Their only child was killed in the war. That is a grief neither can forget. His great position, his title and the money it brought with it cannot descend to a future Allenby, for there is neither son nor daughter to come after. Sad, truly. But they live in the present, this kindly couple, and entertain constantly, receive in a general way on Sundays, go to all the public functions, although they never dine in public at an hotel, and only "tea" in public on rare occasions. Both are very popular.

But to go back a little. The Great War was barely over. Thousands of prisoners were to be seen everywhere, even in Cairo in September, 1919, mostly Turkish. Not a single Britisher over seventeen or under seventy wore plain clothes, and by Christmas there were thirty or forty uniformed officers to every single woman in Cairo. We were then evacuating Syria and Palestine, and officers were waiting literally in hundreds, almost thousands, to be transhipped for home. They had come from India, they had come from everywhere, and they were sleeping in bathrooms, and on billiard tables, or on camp beds in passages, and incidentally having a very good time, as, within a small area, there was a great deal of gaiety.

I saw Lord Allenby's arrival when he motored from the station, both hissed and cheered by the populace.

I also saw Lord Milner's arrival with his now famous "Commission," when the same thing happened, and shortly afterwards heard the yells: "Down with Milner" sing-songed in long-drawn-out cries from the tramcars by day and night, while Arabs clung to the sides, stood on the step-board, or sat or hung on the roofs. Every few days somebody was shot in the streets.

They were exciting times, and it was quite impossible to go beyond Cairo to Luxor or Assouan, while machine-guns, armoured cars, and soldiers were constantly in the streets of the town itself.

Politics were unsettled; there seemed little or no policy. Soldiers were kept on the alert and everybody wanted to be at everybody else's throat.

I was back by the following Christmas (1920) on my return from India, and it was then much quieter. A few months later, namely in March, of 1922, Lord Allenby rushed over to London, and the *Independence of Egypt as a Sovereign State*, whatever that may mean, was proclaimed, an *Independence* which the larger portion of Egypt never wanted, and don't know what to do with now they have got it. The country was never so rich and prosperous as in 1918, 1919, 1920 and 1921. The exchange was up, the cotton was good. The place stood high in the world's esteem. In fact Egypt was one of the richest countries in the world when it was demanding its Independence.

And who made it rich? Why, Great Britain, of course.

In fact, many Egyptians are themselves already beginning to regret it, for they have discovered that the Government yoke of their own fellow-countrymen is less just and more severe than the British reign.

There is no doubt about it we made great mistakes about Egypt. The country wanted to come into the Great War, and we refused.

We promised to consider the position—we dallied.

We interned their agitators one day, and let them free the next.

Egypt wished to be represented in Paris; we refused.

They hated the word "Protection," which they appeared to translate as "Mandateism." They didn't want it.

We made such a bungle of the Arabic translation of General Allenby's Proclamation and Lord Milner's olive-branch document, that both had to be retranslated with apologies. That sort of thing is a pity. No wonder Egypt boycotted the Milner Commission for months, and then only saw its members at back doors or on barges.

Our Government bungled and fumbled, and finally we lost Egypt. Shall we fumble and bungle until we lose the Sudan—in spite of the Sudan's loyalty to Great Britain?

1919, 1920 and 1921 were interesting times to spend in the Middle East and East. Undoubtedly these countries were then looking towards Great Britain for a lead. The Turkish details were

still unsettled, and the Turks number millions; but nothing was settled regarding their position.

Whenever one reads of riots or disturbances of any kind in Egypt, the name of the El Azah University creeps in. The word "University" naturally leads one to think of a seat of learning, wisdom and discretion; but as a good many riots seemed to centre round the El Azah University, I naturally thought I would like to pay it a visit.

To think is one thing, to do is another.

As we arrived at the entrance to the famous old mosque, my faithful Mohammed asked us to wait in the taxi until he got an admission ticket. We waited, and he did not get the admission ticket, but came back very crestfallen to explain that they would not hear of any foreigners coming inside at all, on any pretext whatever. No persuasion on his part had the slightest effect, and so for that year a view of the inside of the El Azah University was a blank.

Being a pertinacious soul, on my return to Egypt a year later, namely, the winter of 1920, I persuaded Mohammed to take me back and try again, having read still of the doings of the students of the El Azah University.

This time we were more successful. The awful howls of "Down with Milner" of a year before had ceased, because Lord Milner had given the Egyptians a good deal more than ever they expected, and things generally were more tranquil. All Easterns ask for three or four times what they expect, and are perfectly content if they get a quarter. We gave the whole and a bit more.

Egypt Barely out of the War

But oh—what a disillusionment was the El Azah University. "A ragged school for young men" would be a more appropriate name, for it certainly has not the appearance of any university in the world that I have seen, and it turns out that the education is free, that any sort and kind of youth may call himself a student, and it is the hot-bed of all the Socialistic movements in Egypt.

Not only is it supposed to be a seat of learning, but the large courtyard seems to be used for everything. Old men and youths were lolling about asleep; others were washing clothes over little pans; some were cooking food over small pots, squatting with their legs crossed in the usual Egyptian fashion; in fact, there seemed to be hundreds of people in that small space, all occupied in doing every sort of thing except learning.

By standing with my back to the wall I managed to get a little sketch, because it was picturesque in its way as a mass of incongruity; but as soon as I realized that a little group had noticed I had a pencil in my hand, it seemed advisable to discontinue and quietly and leisurely get out of the place, for the Egyptians at that time were in no temper to offend.

That was a peaceful winter. The year before had been riotous, and eighteen months after was more riotous still, inasmuch as a number of Europeans were murdered (generally shot in the back) in cold blood by the discontented folk of the Egyptian population, after they had been given their independence. They do not now seem

to be making much use of it, however, and long before the first year was out, the *fellaheen*, or country labourers, were asking to come under British rule again, because they were being taxed in a way they did not like, ruled in a way they hated, and their freedom was much less than it had been under Great Britain's sway.

Methinks before 1925 Egypt will be asking us to go back again, for as one of the great Princes in the land said to me not long ago:

"I love my country, but we are totally unable to rule ourselves. Our populace is not educated. We do not trust one another. You Britishers brought us to the wonderful position of prosperity we have enjoyed, and from the moment we have been given our Independence, our shares, our prospects and our prestige are all diminishing."

Many of these well-bred Egyptians are very charming people, and the women are beginning to take great interest in politics. Those in the upper classes are discarding the heavy veils, and only the thinnest of white gauze covers their pretty faces. They still blacken all round their eyes as they did in the days of the Pharaohs, and yet they wear the highest of heeled shoes instead of Mrs. Pharaoh's sandals.

The working-class women are not veiled. Hence, when a poor man becomes richer, the first thing he does is to buy his wife a veil to show his exalted position. So riches mean retrogression to the women of Egypt and India.

The bazaars in Cairo have enormous iron shutters. They do not have glass windows. The

fronts are open, but at night these iron shutters, or big wooden, iron-clamped shutters, are placed before the windows, as few of the people live at their shops.

Many times, when I was painting in the streets of Cairo, we would hear the roar of these shutters being drawn down or put up. It was a sign that riots were expected, and very quickly mounted police would be riding through the bazaars, and where there was room, lorries with machine guns upon them, manned by many Tommies, were driven through the streets.

Then, alas! I had to pack myself up with all my paraphernalia and my little camp stool and go home.

Nothing ever happened to me; no one was ever rude to me. I never experienced any trouble of any kind, but I had given Lord Allenby a firm promise that I would "keep out of mischief," as he called it, by discreetly retiring when there was likely to be a row, and there were a great many rows during that winter of 1919.

We were very gay, however. One dined out nearly every night, although it was impossible to cross Bulak Bridge after dusk, and as winter progressed people ceased to entertain on the Gezirah side except among themselves, because of the dangers of getting backwards and forwards to Cairo. No place, I suppose, ever had so many men in proportion to women. At a dance the girls had to allot "turns" to different partners. It reminded me of my school youth in Leipzig, where I thought it perfectly lovely to have a

fine upstanding Prussian officer stand opposite me, click his heels, and say :

" Gnädiges Fräulein, darf ich ein extra turn bitten."

Think of Cairo just after the war with two or three partners for every dance, and think of London a couple of years later with no possibility of a girl getting a dance at all unless she took her own partner and stuck to him like a leech all the evening.

Somebody told me there was an interesting small town called Maag a few miles out of Cairo which was very primitive, quaint and paintable. So accordingly, one fine day, a girl friend and I started forth for Maag.

When we arrived at the little station, there was nobody there except a stationmaster. He seemed somewhat surprised to see us, but in answer to an inquiry, said the most picturesque part was to the left by the river.

We turned to the left and proceeded along by the river where we seemed to have stepped straight into a scene from Bible history. There were the women washing their clothes, there were the Rebeccas filling their pitchers, there were the little children in their little white cotton shirts, just as depicted in the Holy pictures of the Early Ages. There was the Joseph, there was the Ass. A most interesting scene.

Suddenly a little boy about eight, in a white shirt, stood before us and said :

" I speek the Engleesh."

" You speak English ? "

" Yes ! I speek the Engleesh."

" How did you learn English ? " I asked.

" Wash plates ! "

" Wash plates " I exclaimed, thinking that was a curious way of learning to speak the English tongue.

" Yes " he replied, " wash plates, soldiers."

" Oh ! you washed the plates for the soldiers, did you ? "

" Yes ! " he replied, his eyes twinkling, " wash many plates—good soldiers—like soldiers—like Engleesh."

And with this staccato conversation, we became quite interested in the little chap.

He did not understand much, nor could he say much, but he was mighty willing, and he was determined we should see the sights of his funny little town, more especially the mud-brick houses on the outside stucco of which were painted huge pictures of dangerous pilgrimages to Mecca. No man dare have such a picture upon his wall unless he has been the pilgrimage which, of course, made him a " Holy man " and entitled him to wear a green turban.

Mecca to them is a long way and a terrific journey, and wonderful stories have been woven round these pilgrimages, so that lions and tigers litter the scene, and elephants and snakes, as if meeting them were a daily occurrence on the trip across the Red Sea.

I made a couple of sketches at Maag, one good and one bad, to a running conversation with the little boy who told us :

" Faather deed—Mother sit home—one seester."

" And what does your sister do ? "

" She sit home," he replied.

" Are you the man of the family, then ? "

" Yes, me man," and his little black eyes twinkled in his well-tanned face.

When we parted from him he was almost in tears, but as it is not a good thing to give these small folk money, we gave him a picture newspaper which he thought wonderful, and a number of biscuits we had with us, some of which he was to give to his mother and his sister, who " sat home."

" Come again," he said when we got to the station.

" Oh, yes, we will come again," we replied.

" To-morrow ? " he asked.

" No, not to-morrow."

" To-morrow, to-morrow," he said.

" No, not to-morrow, to-morrow."

And then pointing to his fingers, he asked :

" To-morrow, to-morrow, to-morrow ? "

" Perhaps, some to-morrow."

And after that we parted.

We did not return for a week, but by this time we had armed ourselves with some provisions for the young man, and a little picture book. There he was on the platform. He rushed at us like a wild animal.

" How do ? " he said, " me station every to-morrow, no lady come. Me station to-morrow, to-morrow, no lady come."

And so he told us the tale of woe, how he had been every to-morrow for a week, waiting at the station for us to arrive.

It is a curious thing how these little boys of Egypt, in fact, in other hot countries, are precocious and well disposed, but as they grow older they seem to get duller and stupider and do not always retain their kindly characteristics.

A year later, when I went back to Maag, another little boy tried to thrust himself upon me, but I would not have him, and after various rebuffs, he went away. He must have recognized me because, in a few minutes, apparently out of nowhere, appeared my original little friend, much grown, with a bare foot terribly swollen from a poisoned bite. He had forgotten much of his quaint English, but was overjoyed at my return.

That first visit to Maag (autumn 1919) had been much the most interesting, but when we told a High Official at dinner that night of our trip to this famous station through which hundreds of tons of dates pass every autumn from the great Date Forest behind, he exclaimed :

" Did you two women go alone ? "

" Yes," I replied.

" Then I request you will not repeat the experiment," he said, " for Maag has been seething with discontent, and you probably only got out of it in safety because you were two unprotected women."

" Then you see what a good thing it was," I replied, " not to be saddled with a male man."

He laughed. " Yes, sometimes they are rather a nuisance," he said, " but still, it was an indiscreet thing to do and you are well out of it."

I assured him nobody had molested us or bothered us in any way, and probably the paint box made

them think that we were some queer sort of creatures who need not be interfered with.

These date forests are wonderful. The trees are very tall; the leaves are all at the top; huge bunches of orange and golden fruit hang on tendrils from just below the branches, and the date is a valuable product; but perhaps the most interesting thing of all is to see the men picking the dates.

No ladders could go to the tops of the trees, no sticks could knock them down, so the men have a wonderful way of hauling themselves up by a rope. The rope is made into a ring, big enough to admit a man and the tree, when his body is swinging out from the trunk, and in some wonderful manner with his feet against the tree itself, he manipulates that rope on which he sits, round and round with little jerks until he reaches the top. There he picks the dates at a tremendous pace either by the branches or separately, whichever comes quickest, and throws them down to the women below. Then they are laid out in the sun to dry—and either packed into boxes or sent away loose for export. A fresh date is a delicious fruit, and not nearly as sweet as a dried one.

A little place like Maag sleeps for most of the year, but during the date season great trains of freight go from there daily, the fruit carriage alone amounting to quite large sums per week.

Talking of fruit, the most varied I ever saw outside Mexico was in Syria. There seemed to be twenty different kinds of grapes to begin with. There were long grapes, nearly two inches long; there were round, fat grapes; there were muscats; there

were black grapes and white grapes, little grapes and big grapes, seedless grapes and over-seeded grapes; in fact, the species was unending, and one must really go to these countries to appreciate the fresh figs and fresh dates; to know what they are in perfection or to realize the quantities of specimens of each kind which can be grown. Although, let it at once be said, no pineapple, peach or nectarine can ever compare in any land with the choice tenderly-cared productions of an English hot-house.

From Smyrna come practically all the currants, and raisins, as we shall see later; from Damascus come acres of apricot pulp, the foundation of so many jams all over the world, as we shall also see. When it is lying in the market, it looks like sheets of red-brown oilcloth or carpet, and stacked in such huge rolls that it is often difficult for one man to move a single piece.

From Mesopotamia, in the camel caravans, come nuts and almonds, but really the only fruit that we can taste in equal perfection in London is the banana, because the banana never ripens on the tree; it is always picked green, and therefore it does not much matter whether it travels home or not. But we only get a few varieties of bananas in England, and there are at least fifty different kinds, from tiny fingers to huge plantains; but many species are spoilt by travel, as is the luscious peach-apple of Canada.

Moralizing on fruit grown in sunny lands, makes one moralize on our position in so many sun-lit spots.

Surely we should never have taken over any place unless we intended to keep it. If we bring civilization with its railways and bridges and electric lights and laws and schools and ideals into a land, as that land grows up so we must let it share in its own administration : but agitators and noisy youth always imagine they are grown up long before they really are.

Nothing is so unruly as a boy or girl of sixteen, seventeen or eighteen years of age. They think they know everything, they kick at anything ; they lecture their elders and cuff their youngers. They are in a state of flux, and so is a half-baked country, and only time can teach it wisdom. Because a few howl and scream for Independence that is no reason why the majority should be sacrificed. When we have taken responsibility we must stand by it.

Never vacillate. One must often be cruel to be kind. Compromise always ends in failure and pleasing no one. Weakness is taken as cowardice and imposed upon by all.

Again and again I say we should have kept Egypt and India, and must keep the Sudan ; and as clearly I feel we ought to clear out of Palestine and Mesopotamia. The two latter are bottomless pits for money and will return nothing for centuries and when they are educated enough to return anything, abuse will follow just as it has done in other half-educated countries where we teach people more than the brains of their millions can grasp or make good use of. The British are great pioneers. They have done great pioneer work ;

but the days for new conquests are over. We have neither the time, the money, nor the firm hand to expand. Let us concentrate our energies on what we have.

Mesopotamia during the war cost us one thousand million pounds. 31,758 were killed or died of disease. We sent 889,702 men there, viz., one man to every three of the inhabitants.

Well—what for? What on earth is the good of Mesopotamia? It is Arab. Let the dozens of creeds and races of the Arabs rule or misrule it for themselves.

Really, when one saw the thousands and thousands, aye, the tens of thousands of little white crosses put up to mark the graves of British soldiers in France, Belgium, Italy, Greece, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and India, it gave one to think, and think furiously.

Memory is fleeting. International memories are particularly so, and how many nations remember to-day the enormous sacrifice Great Britain made in the Great War.

Pause for one moment and remember that between nine hundred thousand and a million soldiers of the British Empire laid down their lives. Nearly a million mothers wept for sons, and one-third of those sons left widows.

Think again. There were another million and a half of men disabled.

Think again. There were another million and a half of children dependent on those who were dead, or those who were disabled, for whom pensions had to be provided.

Think again. And remember there were other thousands of parents, brothers or sisters dependent on our maimed soldiers and sailors.

These lists are stupendous. Four million of our people were in one way or another directly affected by the war.

We are not a big country, in fact our little England is a bagatelle, some forty millions or thereabouts, but we are a vast and wonderful Empire. From that great Empire Britain's sons stepped nobly forward and attained wonderful things.

The dead we cannot recall, in many cases the maimed we cannot heal, but what we have done is to keep our own heads well above water, and as remarked elsewhere, we are the only combatant nation in the world that has raised its gold standard to pre-war value, save in America.

One feels proud to be British. And yet we British people are so shy. We never talk of our " honour " as the Germans do, or our " patriotism " as the French do, or wave " our flags " as the Americans do.

We are foolishly modest, we are stupidly shy; in fact, our national reticence is a deplorable form of conceit.

CHAPTER IV

EGYPT A YEAR LATER

YOU and I will postpone our more warlike Eastern trip for a while and drop down on Egypt again a year later.

Things were quieter. But not for long. Between times we wandered up the Nile, and you and I will later jaunt together 2,500 miles up the White Nile to beyond Fashoda and take a peep at the Blue Nile on the way. Meantime, let us spend Christmas weeks at Luxor and enjoy the warmth and the sunshine while we gaze at ancient Thebes, or enjoy a luncheon party with the head of a well-known Egyptian tribe.

It is always interesting to see something of the habits and customs of native peoples, and it was a very interesting luncheon party to which we rode on donkeys at Christmas, 1920. Our host was El Sayed M. El Mahdi El Idrissi. And the owner had his own beautifully-printed visiting card. The name was both in Arabic and in Latin letters.

This good gentleman's father was the chief of all the tribes from Luxor as far down as Assouan. A very important person, indeed. At the moment his father was away at Aden negotiating with the Senoussi tribes. The young man received us with

true Arab courtesy. He was dressed in a navy cloth robe of the finest web, and met us at the outer gateway of his mud-built house. We followed him through the doorway of an inner courtyard and up a somewhat rickety, untidy wooden staircase to a flat roof. Under the loggia at one end the luncheon table was laid, but we passed by this into the reception room. A narrow, upholstered bench ran round the three walls, even under the shuttered windows. On the walls were some embroidered Arabic writings and in the centre, two carved wooden tables and two or three chairs. But never had they been polished since they were made, and they all looked old, but not antiques. This curious mixture of splendour and decay so often go hand in hand in the East.

We were asked whether we would rather partake of the feast in native or European fashion, and naturally chose the native.

But, in spite of that, we sat round the table on chairs, and were given plates. So far European, but for the rest the native element was uppermost.

When we had taken our seats, our host remained standing, and most solemnly bowing, said what a pleasure and honour our visit was, and in the name of his father, the head of the Idrissi, he bade us welcome. Then, with quiet dignity, he sat down upon a chair.

Our feast consisted first of all of cutlets and green peas which were brought in upon a dish. These our host served with his fingers on to plates which were handed to us, but as we had no earthly idea what we were to do with the food to get it

into our mouths, we had, through our interpreter, to ask him the means of procedure. Most elegantly the Sheikh lifted up his cutlet by the bone and bit off a piece, then he broke up a small portion of soft brown bread, and making a little hole in the middle with his fingers, he filled it up with the peas, and this, in its turn, he conveyed to his mouth. Knives and forks are not known, and looked upon as rare curiosities and superfluities in nearly every land excepting the white men's countries. And, after all, even Queen Elizabeth had not more than a bowing acquaintance with such implements.

We were not very expert, but we managed to get along without them.

After much ceremony, all this paraphernalia was cleared away, and then an entire boiled lamb was brought in, lying on a dish with its little head and feet most neatly curled round, almost as neatly as a fried whiting's tail is put into its mouth. The lamb was dismembered by the fingers, but it was so beautifully boiled and so beautifully young that this was not such a messy performance as it sounds.

Roast pigeons and wheat followed the lamb, the wheat almost looking like rice, and we began to feel that the meal was somewhat solid, and were hoping there was nothing more to follow at this sumptuous repast, but more came.

During this time, be it remembered, we had had nothing to drink, for, being a true Mohammedan, the Sheikh did not touch alcohol and, if the truth be told, we were rather afraid of drinking the water.

Flies are so troublesome in these lands that

beautifully worked little dish covers made of plaited coloured straw are always placed over the food for protection. On this particular occasion we were each given new dish covers, because they were smarter, and when we were leaving, both my sister and I were presented with our own little plaited cover to take home in remembrance of the party. The workmanship was so charming, the colours so beautiful and the necessity for using them as fly protectors in England so rare, that we immediately turned them into the crowns of hats, where they now repose.

Having partaken of the meal with our fingers, we were very pleased afterwards at being invited to wash our hands. A brass bowl, with a piece of soap raised on an iron centre in the basin, stood on an enamelled tripod at one side of the room, and beside it was waiting one of the white-robed, red-belted attendants, with a towel hanging over his outstretched arm. In the other hand he held an elegant brass pot with a long spout, from which he deftly poured water over each visitor's hands in turn as they came up for ablution. It really seemed as if we personally were enacting some gorgeous scene in an opera.

We then adjourned to the salon, where our host went through a most elaborate function of making tea. It was so serious it was almost like a religious ceremony. There were two trays with a tea-pot and six cups on each (the number of the party). A tall Russian samovar (or what looked like one) was brought in and a charcoal fire solemnly lighted beneath. In one teapot the Sheikh made black

tea, in the other green—in both cases caravan tea brought via Persia and the Red Sea. Into the green tea pot, before the boiling water was poured on, I was horrified to see a lump of sugar bigger than my fist pushed, and a green powdered herb which they said was mint. My heart sank at the prospect of the sickly concoction. But, strange to say, it was not at all unpleasant, and was really quite refreshing in that hot weather; in fact, the green tea was much nicer than the black tea, and we were expected to go on drinking cup after cup of the liquids. So what we did not get to drink at the meal was amply made up for afterwards.

Our host was most anxious to be photographed, and inquired, as soon as we arrived, if we had a camera. We had. For this important performance he took off his long blue robe, and appeared in a cream embroidered one; so he was pictured, together with his land agent, who had been brought in specially to see us.

We were very anxious, in our turn, to see the women folk of this Egyptian Prince Charming, but that was quite impossible. It was explained by our interpreter that we must not press the question, as he would not like to say "No" to the English ladies, and such a thing was unheard of in his home. In fact, white people had hardly ever crossed the threshold, and our going there had been a particular favour.

The meal and the tea had taken a considerable time—hours, in fact—but the conversation had been extremely limited, although a great many

smiles and hand-shakes had taken the place of the exchange of brilliant ideas.

This man was an exalted Egyptian. He spoke nothing but his own language, and even read Arabic with difficulty.

At last, having finished our very solemn party, and each of us having drunk several cups of tea and been pressed to drink several more, we got up to leave. Not only had we been having a party upstairs, but the donkeys had been having a party downstairs, and had been so overfed that when it came to riding back to Luxor, even the joy of seeing their native town before their noses did not make them bestir themselves.

The entire village was at the door to see us off. This man, it must be remembered, ruled over tens of thousands of people, and at this particular village two or three hundred of his followers had collected to see such rarities as three English women.

His courtesy in helping us to mount, his charming salutations of good-bye after he had solemnly introduced his mayor and other officials, was really a lesson in good manners, and his parting words were to be sure and come again, by which time he hoped to have learned English, as he was going shortly to study reading and English in Cairo.

As we jogged back to the town, the incessant squeak of the water wheels made music in our ears, for nothing is more strange in Egypt than the way these water wheels, often every few hundred yards apart, work incessantly to irrigate the land, just as they did in the same primitive

way in the days of Pharaoh. It is a curious noise, to some people an irritant, to others quite soothing; but whatever its effect on the nerves, it certainly is a strange remnant of ancient custom handled in exactly the same way to-day as it was thousands of years ago. Nature has many moods and each has its fascination.

As we rode on that great Temple of Karnak was on our left, with its one hundred and thirty-three colossal columns in the Hall of Seti, which never looked more beautiful than it did on Christmas Eve in the full and radiant moonlight. Leaving Karnak, we passed the Luxor Temple, shimmering grey in the evening glow with the sunset behind, and one felt how much more reposeful the little Temple of Luxor is than that colossal bit of Karnak erected by Rameses III., if I remember rightly, for I am only writing from memory, and memory is a fickle nymph.

Egypt is the same to-day as in the days of Rameses—anyway, as regards its women, who all trudge down to the water in the early dawn and trudge down again at sunset with their pitchers upon their heads, just as Rebecca went to the well. In single file, thousands and thousands of these women are doing the same thing at the same hour all over Egypt. They are not beautiful as women, and they certainly are not clean, and their black or blue dresses are generally trailing in the dust; but their figures and their pose are immaculate; never were there more graceful women or more exquisite lines of body. Their gait is a lesson in deportment; their arms are beautifully

rounded and their hands are small; in fact, the poorer women of Egypt, though plain of face, are shapely of body, and their gliding walk and elegant postures are things to be remembered. The women never enter the mosques. They do not pray in public; but the men of Egypt are most devout Mohammedans as a rule, especially in the country. At sunset down they kneel, wherever they are, with their eyes turned to Mecca, while up and down they bend as they tell their beads and murmur their Koran. Religion has a great hold on all simple peoples. Long may it continue.

How History and Fashion repeat themselves. And nowhere is this more striking than at Thebes, opposite Luxor. Here are what are commonly called "The Tombs of the Kings." Eighty of the Pharaohs were buried there, and deep in the sandy hillside are their wonderful chapels, with their vivid colouring and quaint decorations. Best of all to my mind was that of Rameses III., although the colourings were more vivid in the Tombs of the Queens, especially in that of the little boy. To show how Fashion repeats itself, although done thousands of years ago, pictures of women were painted upon the walls wearing low dresses and shoulder straps exactly as they do to-day. And the hobble skirt was then the mode.

No, Egypt has not changed much. There are still the public letter-writers, bamboo pen in hand; there are still the little groups listening to the one man in a village who can read bits of news to them from the papers. Indeed, in a big important town like Luxor, every evening along the

river bank the few educated Dragomen are busily employed reading aloud to the donkey boys, who have been running barefooted all day behind their donkeys across the sandy stretches in the hill of the Temples of the Kings and Queens.

The East and Middle East are not educated yet. The great voice of the people is silent. Is it then fair to listen to the handful of agitators who shriek so loudly and demand so much, that their own people do not even want? Education and evolution move slowly.

Mohammed's birthday took place in December. Mohammed's birthday is a great event for his followers, and one of the things much appreciated by the children is the sugar doll made at that time of year in his memory.

We make hot-cross buns, pancakes and plum puddings in memory of our forms of religion; the Jews make their Passover bread; and the Mohammedans, among other things, make little dolls. These birthday feasts are not the only similarity between the Christian and Mohammedan religions; those who can read the Koran and the Bible side by side, declare they are full of similarities. After all, the Mohammedan religion is even a newer religion than the Christian. The dolls of sugar are sold in the bazaars in booths, and these booths are erected, being temporary affairs, before the mosques. In front, a table ran the whole length, raised about four feet from the road. It was probably of this height so that no one should purloin the goods

displayed. On the middle of this table, towards the back, squatted the Mohammedan vendor, and on either side of him were slanting tiers of wood, on which rows and rows of sugar figures, quaint dolls and paper decorations of every kind were piled.

A still more Eastern touch came from the fact that the squatting Arab invariably had a switch fan in his hand, either made from the tail hairs of a horse, from a collection of rags, or from pieces of coloured paper; and with this all day, when not actually engaged in selling his wares, he was flicking to keep away the flies. First he would fan one side, then gently he would fan on the other side, but the swish, swish, swish of those fans went on all day for about a fortnight while the Mohammedan dolls were being sold in honour of Mohammed's birthday.

From Luxor you and I must wander on south to Assouan, where we had a curious experience at Philæ. Having gone in the Government launch to the famous temple, I settled myself down to make the little sketch facing this page. It was a most gorgeous afternoon, the day after the New Year of 1921.

We had not been there very long before a small boat rowed out from the shore, and the two men began an earnest conversation with our engineer. The engineer, who was a foreigner, translated what the Arabs said—namely, that they could take us for about a shilling a head inside the temple.

I was busy, but my sister was delighted at the idea, stepped into the boat and disappeared.

Philæ Temple, Assouan. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie in possession of Mr. Edwin Tate

[*To face v.* 50.

The Bond Street of Kosti, 2,000 miles up the White Nile, Southern Sudan. The natives live in these "Turkls." From a water-colour sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie, in the possession of Mrs. Miles Kennedy

Plaintiffs waiting for the Court to open at Kosti, White Nile, Sudan

The Sud Hundreds of square miles of Pampas grass, Central Sudan. Photo by the Author. *See page* 269.

It seemed to me but a few minutes before they returned, and she said:

"Oh, it is perfectly lovely inside; you must come! Put those silly old paints away and come and look at the gorgeous colours inside the temple at the heads of the Greek pillars."

So, after a minute's persuasion, I, too, tumbled into the boat, and we rowed off to the entrance of this famous building. At the New Year the water was covering two-thirds of the door, because it must be remembered that the Dam at Assouan holds back the water of the Sudan seventy feet, and is let down as required to fertilize Egypt.

When we arrived at this entrance, there seemed no possibility of getting in at all; but, as my sister explained, she had been inside a few moments before—although she had had to lie in the bottom of the boat. The row-locks scraped along the top of what would really have been the ceiling. When I arrived, we could hardly even get in by such means.

"It is very extraordinary," she said, "because with your extra weight in the boat" (not complimentary to me) "we ought to have more room instead of less, and be deeper in the water."

However, by the two boatmen wriggling and twisting and pushing the sides, we dived through this low passage-way, and found ourselves inside the wonderful edifice.

Then, of course, I regretted I had not brought the "stupid old paints" with me; but it was too late to go back and fetch them, so having admired the gorgeous colours which the water of

the Nile completely covers for half of every year, and which seemed by no means spoiled by that fact, we told the men to take us back to our launch.

Now came the rub. We had got in with considerable difficulty, but when it came to getting out, it seemed as though it was going to be impossible.

"The water must have risen," exclaimed Mrs. Goodbody. "It certainly must be several inches higher than when I came in an hour ago, and even higher than when we came in a few minutes back."

This was really getting rather tragic, for out through that passage we had to go or not at all. However, by all lying down in the bow of the boat, with a sort of nose-dive process we managed to get a start on, and by degrees we were able to scrape out.

We were still pondering on the strangeness of the water when we arrived to take tea with the clever Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Watt. Here, with great glee, I showed the opalescent colouring of the little sketch taken from outside the temple (which looks nothing whatever in reproduction), and gleefully explained about the water.

He turned positively green. His hair went straight up on end, if hair can do such a thing.

"Good God!" he said, "what an awful catastrophe!"

"Why?"

"Why?" he exclaimed. "Because we turned the water on this afternoon. You had no right

whatever to be inside there. The boatmen should have known and warned you, and had you stayed much longer you would have been buried in."

" Oh ! " the pen-woman remarked cheerily, " you could have turned the water off again."

" Turned the water off," he exclaimed, even more tragically than before. " I could not have turned the water off without a special permit from Cairo. It would have cost hundreds of pounds to do so, and I don't exactly know what would have happened, for such a horrible situation has never arisen before."

Fools step in where angels fear to tread ; but all is well that ends well, and we did not end our days in a watery grave in the romantic interior of the still more romantic Temple of Philæ.

A beautiful evening, retained in the golden casket of remembrance. One travels to enjoy oneself, to look for the best in all things, not to grizzle over uncomfortable experiences.

Laugh and the world laughs with you, is mighty true.

And the more one journeys in distant lands, and studies men, women and things, one realizes more and more what a vast book Experience really is.

CHAPTER V

PALESTINE UNDER MILITARY RÉGIME—AFTER WAR DAYS

FIRST let me introduce you to the Palestine of the New Year of 1920, when our soldiers were leaving.

Then you and I will re-visit it a year later, and see the extraordinary change from the military supervision to the civil.

And perhaps by 1925 you; yourself, will have visited this ancient Holy Land, and can tell me your experiences, as I shall now tell you mine, and then you and I can compare notes again.

The day after the ridiculous episode of sitting so ignominiously on the floor at an official dinner-party at the Residency, I fled from Cairo, and started for Palestine for a fortnight while waiting for a boat to India. Those were still war days, and ships were very irregular. They were still in charge of an Army officer; in fact, from Marseilles to Port Said we had had 1,700 Indians aboard, and only a small handful of passengers, all of whom had to conform to war regulations.

Although four months had gone by, things were still pretty bad, and one had to do what one was told, and pay the piper at the same time to the

"The Kaiser and Kaiserin" (about 15 feet big), on the ceiling, among the prophets, of the fine Byzantine Church, and near The Christ over the Altar. The Palace adjoining is now Government House. It stands on the top of the Mount of Olives at Jerusalem. I stayed there a week with General Sir Louis Bols when it was O.E.T.A. (H.Q.). Photo by Lieut. Mirehouse, Prince of Wales Volunteers

[*To face p.* 54.

Delhi at night. Crossing the Jumna. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie, in possession of Mrs. Cozens Brooke.

A Snake Charmer.

The taxi of India.

Photos by the Author. *See Chap. VIII.*

tune of sixty pounds for a ticket (at the lowest rate) from Port Said to Bombay. One used to travel from Bombay to London, twice the distance, for fifty pounds.

The bridge at Kantara was still standing—that famous bridge which was put up, under fire, across the Suez Canal, so that the troops could be conveyed direct to Palestine or Syria for Lord Allenby's campaign. It had suffered much from war-work, and already heavy trains were forbidden to use it; but it could still stand the weight of an engine and a couple of carriages, and, consequently, in Lord Allenby's own personal car—in which he and General Sir Louis Bols, his Chief of Staff in France and Syria, had done so much of their famous campaign—I left Cairo with Sir Louis and crossed over the famous bridge. It was dusk; the little lights of the tents twinkled all along the canal bank where the soldiers were cooking, chatting, reading, or washing their clothes. It was quite an interesting sight.

Crossing this pontoon bridge saved a great deal of trouble; otherwise one had to descend from the train on the western African side, and walk across the bridge to Kantara (while the luggage was conveyed mysteriously in little trucks), get into the Jerusalem train on the Sinai Peninsula, and proceed on one's journey to Jerusalem itself, an ascent to 3,500 feet. Up to the war days, the greater portion of this long journey had to be done by driving; but Lord Allenby's men had laid the line under fire, and conveyed the water seventy miles for the troops to the top of

the mountain. Surely that railway and water pipe were among the most wonderful pieces of engineering work ever accomplished.

Kantara is a terrible place—in fact, it is no place at all. No one could have the slightest idea of the miseries that were experienced round Kantara. It is an absolutely dreary waste, this bit of the Sinai Peninsula. There is not a tree. There are no proper houses—in fact, no buildings of any kind worth mentioning; but on this spot tents were pitched, and those tents housed one million men for several dreary years. Yes, a million men had sat upon those sandy shores of the Suez Canal, in all the heat, mosquitoes, and dreariness of the war years. They were dumped there from home, they were dumped there from the Antipodes and India. It was not only a great training centre, but it was a great jumping-off post from which to start for whatever part of the war zones the men were most wanted.

But it was a lonesome spot. When I crossed that bridge the first time, there were still one hundred thousand men living in huts or tents at Kantara, with Colonel the Earl of Stradbroke at their head, whose beautiful wife had constantly been my hostess at Cairo.

There has been great talk since the "Independence of Egypt" (March, 1922) of withdrawing the British troops from Egypt and making Kantara on the opposite side of the Suez Canal their headquarters. Poor men, what a prospect.

To return to the bridge itself. Until the war days people had to cross this strip of canal water

by ferry if they wished to go north to Jerusalem or Damascus. That was an impossible situation with a war raging, just as impossible as to move men without giving them a drinking-water supply. Both were overcome.

The troops, the guns, horses, aeroplanes, food—everything went over the Kantara Bridge. It was the great connecting link, the vital artery of an army.

It was a swing bridge, and a procession of boats, big ocean liners, passed through at certain hours of the day. There was no trouble about it. It was quite an easy business, and no accidents ensued therefrom.

After the war was over, however, the French, who practically control the Canal, under my friend Monsieur le Comte de Sérrione (whom I originally met at the country house of his cousin, Monsieur le Comte Charles de Lesseps, son of the great Ferdinand), decided that the Kantara Bridge was in the way; that it was too shaky to remain as it was, and must therefore be demolished, and as it was an impediment to shipping, they also decided they would not allow a new one to be built. Thus the possibility of a railway journey straight from Aleppo, through Damascus, Jerusalem, Egypt and the Sudan to the Cape remained a dream, and a dream only.

And the last time I saw Kantara the bridge had disappeared (it was demolished by the French at Christmas, 1920), and that uncomfortable method of ferry transport from one shore to the other had again taken its place. For how long?

Having crossed the bridge northwards in comfort, it was rather sad, many hours later, to turn out from Lord Allenby's private car, with its good food and an attendant, although there was nothing very gorgeous about it. Still, it had cane armchairs, and a couple of small cabins with bunks in them; but out we had to bundle at Ludd, as General Sir Louis Bols was going off to the north to Haifa, on an inspection for twenty-four hours, and we were going direct east to Jerusalem, where he would pick us up again. Thus it came to pass that, for the first time, I was landed in Ludd. Ludd was nothing when the war began. It was just a small junction, without a station. I saw it gradually grow, under British rule, during four visits in little over a year. When I left it last, it was assuming a sort of Clapham-Junction-of-the-Holy-Land aspect as far as Palestine was concerned.

That first time, a charming woman, Mrs. Merton, wife of *The Times* correspondent in Cairo, was my companion, and we had to travel from Ludd up to Jerusalem in one of the ordinary carriages. Anything more uncomfortable cannot be imagined. To begin with, they were third-class coaches; to continue, they had been thoroughly well banged about in the war. Also, they were utterly devoid of glass windows; some were even without doors, or any form of light by night. What they were pleased to call the "officers' car" was really nothing more than a horse-box. In that we journeyed to the Holy City.

It was bitterly cold. The wind blew right through the windowless carriage. As we ascended

those 8,500 feet to Jerusalem we literally shivered, and our teeth chattered, for there was no means of keeping warm, whilst sitting round our one funny little candle and eating a cold meal produced from paper bags.

Everything was military. The stations were crammed with soldiers; no mufti was to be seen and very few women. Those who were there were in nurses' uniform. In fact, Ludd was really a military garrison. Military trains, guns, lorries, tents, several Y.M.C.A. huts, and R.T.O., and such-like military alphabet was painted up on every side. Ludd was a war junction. Our passports were military, and soldiers were everywhere.

A year later (November, 1920) all was changed. This war junction of the desert had become a Clapham Junction of semi-civilization. True, there were still no waiting rooms or restaurants—they came a few months later—but the number of railway lines was surprising, thanks to British enterprise. What was more wonderful, however, was that the broken-about railway carriages had disappeared, and sleeping cars—yes, actually Pullman sleeping cars—were running between Kantara and Jerusalem, or Kantara and Haifa in the north.

Not only were there sleeping cars, but there were dining cars as well; in fact, the transformation was unbelievable, and it was largely due to Colonel Holmes, R.E., who, to meet the comfort of passengers, actually allowed them to go on board the train at Jerusalem or Haifa in the evening at nine or ten o'clock, so that they might get comfortably off to sleep in their little beds

(each passenger had a cabin to himself) before the train started at five o'clock in the morning. Such consideration was greatly appreciated, because these trains have to run in daylight round the dangerous rocky curves and steep ascents, and it would be an unkind thing to be asked to catch a train at five o'clock in the morning, when, by a little courtesy on the part of the railway company, one can get comfortably settled down over night. Certainly a miracle of railway travelling had happened under British administration in one year.

And what of Jerusalem ?

The first impression as one arrives is that of an ugly, modern, red-roofed, whitewashed little town. It is a bit of a shock, this modern town, for it is so terribly modern; but once inside the famous walls, once inside the real Jerusalem, which is still completely encircled and only entered by fine old gates, one steps back two thousand years, and finds the bazaars and alleys just as Christ walked down them at that time. Even to-day there is only one break in the walls, and that was made for Kaiser Wilhelm II. in 1906, when he insisted on riding into the old city dressed up as a Crusader in white, with the Cross upon his breast and mounted on a white steed. He could only ride a few yards, because the bazaars soon stopped his way. A modern clock tower, with cheap German clocks, was put up on the Jaffa Gate by the side of which he entered, to commemorate this great and glorious event.

Lord Allenby, as conqueror of Palestine, walked in beneath the Jaffa Gate on his feet.

Palestine under Military Régime

It will be remembered that Jerusalem was taken by Lord Allenby's army on the 9th December, 1917, and the official entry into the town was made by the British two days later.

This army consisted of three cavalry and mounted divisions, of which one was of Yeomanry, one of Australians, and one of New Zealanders and Australians. Some may like to remember that there were seven British infantry divisions and a large number of line of communication troops; included in these was a battalion of French Territorials and one company of Italian troops. A South African brigade of artillery was with one of the divisions, and two batteries of West Indian troops were in the line of communication troops, also one cavalry division of Indian Imperial Service troops. Indian troops were most successfully employed in Palestine and earned much praise. Every other person in Jerusalem at that time wore khaki, and, their work done, nearly all of them were waiting to go south. We had passed trainloads of Indian troops on our way up, bound for their home in the East, with all their mules and equipment in open trucks along those hundreds of miles of railway. The men were loosely packed, and many of them were playing cards as they turned their backs on Syria and Palestine after our evacuation at Christmas, 1919. Many of the Indian troops were also guarding the famous water pipe-line, which made Jerusalem a possible city to live in, instead of a waterless one. British engineers again.

It was a novel experience, the drive by road from

Jerusalem past the Garden of Gethsemane to the top of the Mount of Olives where the Kaiser had planted his famous castle. This great Byzantine building was called a "Hostel," where German pilgrims were to be taken in for five shillings a night, but, considering the way it was built, the thickness of its walls, the magnificence of its position, and the very wide, well-laid military road leading thereto, one can only believe that it was really made as a great fortress, more especially as the church was built with a high tower, adding another 250 feet to the 3,500 already ascended. From that tower the great German searchlight, which was still standing when I was staying there, could pretty well sweep the whole of Palestine, which is only about the size of Wales.

There is a wonderful view from that church tower, standing wellnigh 5,000 feet above the Dead Sea, which one sees almost perpendicularly below. That thirty-five miles of water lies 1,200 feet below the level of the ocean, and is deep blue and calm, nestling among the sandy, rocky, yellow hills. Opposite rise the hills of Moab, glorious in pinks and yellows in the evening light.

At the northern end, below Jericho, the water is dark and muddy—Why? Because, perfectly clearly, one sees the River Jordan, which has flowed out of the Sea of Galilee, entering the Dead Sea. That clear early January day one saw for sixty or seventy miles in every direction, from the church tower, away to Hebron, to Solomon's Pools and to Bethlehem across some of the most historically religious lands of time.

Facing the other way, across the garden of Gethsemane lies Jerusalem, only about half a mile distant. No wonder Christ stood on the Mount of Olives and wept over Jerusalem. Look upon that scene in the sunrise across the Dead Sea, or the moonrise away towards Bethlehem, and one does not wonder He was moved to tears. It is a panorama of striking magnitude and beauty. Those miles and miles of hill and vale are barely cultivated to-day, the trees disappeared centuries ago, but already the British Government had planted 800,000 trees of different sorts, and started prosperity for the people, who appreciated the British at that time and were most kindly disposed to them. The Palestinians showed this kindly feeling at every turn and in every possible way.

That great German Palace on the sacred Mount of Olives was shaken at the foundation by the war, although only a few shots really touched its walls, and the *Administrator of Occupied Enemy Territory* (called for short O.E.T.A.), General Sir Louis Bols, who, with his staff lived in the building, had to have it shored up.

It was an interesting place to stay in. Arrived at the handsome stone entrance, the doors were flung wide and there, before the marble halls, stood gorgeous menservants in blue uniforms embroidered in red and gold, to bid us welcome. These magnificent looking lackeys were really Turkish prisoners. They had been in service at the Palace before, and were still retained in the capacity of door-keepers, thereby making practical use of our Turkish prisoners of war.

The kindliest of hosts took us upstairs and along enormously wide passages which looked into the square garden below, and, turning to me, announced that I was to have the Von Falkenhayn suite. This was entered by a big Byzantine arch, and certainly Von Falkenhayn had done himself well in his apartments. An enormous bedroom with solid "new art" German furniture. Huge cupboards and a writing table; massive chairs and sofas. A fine dressing-room beyond and a bathroom; but the Kaiser was not a good plumber, for there were no radiators anywhere and mighty few baths.

I simply revelled in Von Falkenhayn's former comforts. He died "a nobody" in the Spring of 1922, but at his zenith was Chief of Staff in Germany, and a very great personage.

Proceeding down those wondrous passages, one could not help noticing the preponderance of the German language, for on every possible wall were the names of the official German occupants of every suite, names of the Lord Chamberlain, the Mistress of the Household, the Secretaries, and Military or Political potentates. There they remained in the New Year of 1920, and even the "glorious entry of the Kaiser into Jerusalem" was depicted in a large picture near the writing-table of General Bols, which he refused to move and rather enjoyed sitting beside.

That palace is an uncomfortable, draughty place in many ways, in spite of double doors and double windows, for the wind sweeps through from every side, and it seems strange the Kaiser, who

planned it so well for war, omitted central heating and warmth for peace.

And among other interesting things left behind by the ex-Kaiser were golden leather cushions and chairs with his Royal arms upon them.

On passing down one of the passages, my attention was arrested by a baccarat table. Turning to Sir Louis, I chaffed him at having such a weird green baize at Headquarters.

"Don't blame me," he said. "It is nothing whatever to do with me, and I am rather wondering what to do with it. It is a baccarat table left behind by Kaiser William II. A queer thing to leave in a hostel for pilgrims," he continued, with a merry wink.

What is one to think of the Kaiser?

First, he acquired land on the top of the Mount of Olives, one of the most sacred spots in the world. Then he built an enormous, four-sided Byzantine Palace, suggesting that it was really a hostel for pilgrims to live in, at five shillings a day. Then he made a marvellous military road up that steep incline, at a gradient that would take the heaviest guns, two abreast, to its summit. He built a fine church with a tower, to reach whose top there are 250 steps, and in that tower he planted an enormous German searchlight.

Was he so pleased with himself for building on one of the finest and most sacred spots on earth this palace of Byzantine form—but in reality a fortress—that he must needs put bronze statues of himself, and pictures of himself in its corridors, and even on the ceiling of its very church?

Who can doubt that the All-Powerful proposed to add to his titles that of King of Palestine ?

There are wonderful mosaics in that church of excellent artistic taste, and then upon the amazed beholder break enormous ten or fifteen feet high figures of the Kaiser himself and his wife, painted upon the chapel ceiling, along with the Saints and Prophets, and even facing Christ Himself. It is a case of profanity glorified, sanctity reviled ; and, in strange contrast, the British Tommy bowed his knee and prayed in the Kaiser's church ; while just the same strong Briton, so hated of the Teuton, stood sentinel, capless, and with fixed bayonet, in the tiny, much-quarrelled-over Chapel of the Nativity at Bethlehem.

A hatless British soldier on guard was a singular spectacle. For six months under military rule, Tommy took the place of the Turk. It was the first time Tommy was ever on duty without his hat, but, by Allenby's orders he supplanted the Turkish soldiers who had stood there so long. When I returned to Palestine a year later—after my visit to India—the military administration was over. Civilian had taken its place. Tommy had gone from Bethlehem and a dirty-looking Palestine policeman had taken his place. As the Palestine Police are so largely recruited from the Irish Constabulary to-day, perchance an Irishman is there beside that Holy Star of Bethlehem in the strange small cave, once called a stable, with its endless twinkling little silver lamps.

Anyway, Palestine need have no fear in British

hands, for Gentiles, Moslems and Jews are safe. The British Empire stands for Justice.

Speaking of a stable, one must remember that any sort of cave forms an eastern stable. It is a shelter, and accordingly donkeys, ponies, and camels all feed and rest in such primitive " stables." Now there is a church over the site of the Nativity, and to prevent animals defiling so sacred a place, the entrance door to the Church has been made very small, so that one has to step up over a raised kerb and bend one's head down to get in at all. Result, no animal can now walk in.

No Jew could enter Bethlehem any more than a Jew could enter the German Island of Borkum off Heligoland a few years ago. There are still few Israelites in Bethlehem, but in Palestine generally one is struck on all sides by the black curls of the Jews' beards, and their jet black hair in greasy ringlets. Those ringlets are often ten and twelve inches long, in bunches of tight, sausage-like curls. Some terrible Shylocks are to be seen, and also some very fine types. When I paid my first visit to the Holy Land, the Jew and his donkey politely stood upon one side of the narrow bazaars to let me pass. When I returned a year later I had to stand back to let the Jew and the donkey pass me. What a change.

In Bethlehem one could not help noticing the good looking Christian women who were unveiled. They wore two-feet high white head-dresses, which seemed to give dignity to their bearing and were a remnant of the old Crusader days ; in contrast, the women of Jerusalem are of a much plainer type,

and most of them (the Mohammedans) are completely obliterated by a thick veil over the face.

Speaking of Bethlehem, Colonel Gladstone was Governor in the military days, and, being a devout Catholic, the people loved him for his faith in his religion, and respected him greatly as a man. They even listened to his wise counsel over the cleaning of a particular window in the church over which there has been feud for centuries and blood is spilt almost yearly.

Palestine is a cosmopolitan crowd of British, American, Italian, Syrian, Russian, Greek and other nationalities, and the bazaars of Jerusalem are as crowded as those of Cairo and even more picturesque; they are far lower in pitch and completely covered in. The Jerusalem Gothic Arches run for long, low vistas into which streaks of light slant from above. There seem to be as many arches in Jerusalem as bridges in Venice. I loved those bazaars and painted them a dozen times or more. To my mind, the bazaars of Jerusalem and Hebron are far more interesting than those of Cairo or Damascus or Bombay. The people of Palestine and Egypt, too, are quite different in aspect. The endless black coats and red tarbooshes (fez), the long, coloured nightgown-looking robes of gorgeous hue, so noticeable in Cairo, have disappeared in Jerusalem; and the plain white turban has given place to the gorgeous Bedouin head-shawl fixed to the scalp by a silk or cotton skein, banded every few inches by gold or silver wire. The people of Jerusalem, broadened by their huge-sleeved

garments, look far more Eastern than the men of Cairo.

To sum up, one might say that Palestine is more old-world to-day than Egypt; the people are more Eastern in physiognomy and dress, the habits and customs are more cosmopolitan and more primitive. While Egypt has arrived, Palestine is yet in the making.

Think what marvels Great Britain has done for Palestine in the last few years. Picture those hundreds of miles of roads, of railways in passes hitherto considered impossible; think of the water supplies. Since the war Great Britain has laid the foundation of a great and new land—for whom?

Palestine was Canaan, the Land of Promise, the Holy Land, the Land of Israel. Palestine should spell religion. It is the "Holy Land," and yet how bitter have been, and are, the feuds. To those who are truly devout, a visit to Palestine can do no harm, because they will look at everything through their own sweet, religious eyes, and never notice the tawdry. They will seek the beautiful and find it. For the scoffer, Palestine will but heighten his unbelief; for the doubtful, it may shake what faith remains.

God's rock, nature's majesty, speaks more than all the tinsel and bunting man can weave, and one longs for God's hand alone in all its simplicity. One craves for more nature, more simplicity, and abhors man's commonplace decoration, and jejune embellishments. Man's defilement would be a truer expression perhaps, for man has done his best for centuries to destroy history, and religion

and nature. It was especially painful, after an interesting drive to Bethlehem, to see the crowding of trumpery lamps and embroideries and mediocre ware in the spot where Christ was born. Alas, also the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem itself has been made tawdry and vulgar.

And yet one turns aside from what is modern, and cheap, and vulgar and reflects on time. Think of the scenes two thousand years ago; and for hundreds of years those Franciscan monks have held that sacred service every Friday before the Altar of Anointment, a dozen steps lower than where Christ was crucified, and only a dozen yards from where the Body was buried. Age demands veneration. Above the Altar of Anointment hang eight little lamps all alike except for colour.

Two belong to the Orthodox Greek Church.

Two to the other Greek Church.

Two to the Latins.

Two to the Christian Armenians.

(Which comprise all such modern people as Lutherans, Church of England, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Quakers, etc.)

Those lights are never allowed to go out. Each religion looks after its own two, to avoid the ceaseless quarrels that used to arise when anyone's sacred lamp became extinguished. It was here we saw one of the most outwardly devout men it has ever been my fate to meet. He prostrated himself before the altars. He wept. He was in a frenzy of religion and had travelled thousands of miles for this glad moment.

Services are always following closely on one

another, the Holy Sepulchre being portioned off for certain religions at certain hours of the day. All may worship there.

I wonder if you will be as surprised at Calvary as I was ? Having travelled much all over Europe, as well as elsewhere, it always seemed that a cross put at the top of a particularly high hill was called "Calvary," and in the Catholic countries the fourteen Stations of the Cross were planted at long intervals up the steep sides of a circuitous road to Calvary.

Therefore, I naturally supposed that something of the same kind would be seen in Jerusalem, the original site of Calvary itself. Nothing of the kind. When one enters the church of the Holy Sepulchre with its various guards squatting, on the left one faces the Altar of Anointment. Turning to the right and ascending a few steps, one enters the chamber of the Crucifixion. Now this was a great surprise. In the first place it is very small, though one can distinctly see three holes in the floor in which the crosses stood, and looking down, one can see the rock in which they were embedded. Otherwise the place is crammed full of decorations and lamps and pictures in one heterogeneous mass. Luckily the light is bad and so they are not as obtrusive as they might be.

When the Body was taken down from the Cross, it was carried down what would probably be a dozen steps to be anointed at the next rock, i.e., the Rock of Anointment facing the door, which is now set in to an altar with two colossal candlesticks on either side. Again the Body was carried

on perhaps a hundred paces to where it was buried.

Surprise No. 1.—That Calvary was not the peaked summit of a mountain. It is really a bit of the flat top of the hill on which Jerusalem is built.

Surprise No. 2.—That the scene of the Crucifixion itself was so small and confined.

Surprise No. 3.—That the whole ceremony took place in what is now called The Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Surprise No. 4.—That instead of this being outside the walls as one somehow imagined, one enters the Holy Sepulchre Church from the inside of the walls of Jerusalem.

There are people, of course, who scoff at the authenticity of the whole story. Whether it be true or false, for hundreds and hundreds of years people have worshipped at this particular spot; that alone gives it sanctity, and not for one moment during the twenty-four hours of a day, would it be possible to find the Holy Sepulchre without someone praying in some corner. More than that, they are not all of one religion, for tradition has made this place so sacred that, as just said, other than the Christians bow their knee in this historical edifice.

Volumes have been written round this holy story. Guide books of description have been penned, so I can only look at it from my point of view as a great emblem of the Christian Faith, a great monument of religious worship, a place to be revered and held sacred for all times.

No one can conceive the excitement of the Jews

before the Wailing Wall of Jerusalem. The first time I saw them was only a few months after Palestine had been liberated by Great Britain from the Turks. There were then only eight at prayer. The next time was just a year later. The number had swollen to fifty-two. The tears rolled out of their eyes, their howls and groans were pitiable, they even banged their heads against the wall. Their frenzy was even more than the frenzy of the Pilgrims at Lourdes. Lourdes is a special pilgrimage—the Wailing Wall is a daily affair. Yes, fifty-two men and women were wailing—for what? Not for the restoration of Palestine—unless "to wail" had become a habit of generations that they could not lightly give up. Wailing for the restoration of the Temple of Solomon? Perhaps, because it is said even a Cabinet Minister supports that idea, apparently forgetting that the ground of the Temple of Solomon has for centuries been the site of one of the great Mohammedan mosques in the world, the Dome of the Rock, or often called the Mosque of Omar. As well say demolish Westminster Abbey because the land is near the spot where Julius Cæsar trod—though in fact he didn't—and let a temple be erected to him on the site.

About the New Year the British Military Authorities issued an order that the Hebrew language, like the English, French and Arabic tongues, was to be treated as one of the official languages of the country. Therefore proclamations in four languages were posted all over the place. Just as a specimen the one below—which has to do with

food, in English—may be of interest. They did much to restore law and order. They were great placards about eight feet square. Unfortunately that order for including Hebrew as an official language led to trouble later on.

No. 153

PUBLIC NOTICE

WHEREAS it has been established that supplies of cereals and other necessities of life, hereinafter called foodstuffs, are being unduly withheld from consumption, and that the food supply of the large consuming centres is being thereby endangered, AND WHEREAS it is necessary to take measures to ensure the prevention of undue withholding, I, Major-General Sir Louis J. Bols, in virtue of the powers conferred upon me as CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR by Warrant under the hand of the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief the Egyptian Expeditionary Force,

HEREBY ORDER AS FOLLOWS:

1. Every Military Governor may, by Order, require any person in his District to make a declaration in such form and within such time as may be specified in the Order:
   (a) As to the quantity of foodstuffs owned by him or in his possession or under his control, and
   (b) As to the place or places in which such foodstuffs are stored.

2. Any such Order may direct that, pending the decision of the Military Governor, the foodstuffs shall not be removed or otherwise disposed of without his consent.
3. Every Military Governor may, for the purpose of testing the accuracy of any declaration made in pursuance of an Order issued under Clause I. :
   (I.) Issue an Order for the inspection of any lands or premises belonging to or in the occupation or under the control of the person who has made the declaration.
   (II.) Order the production and inspection of all books and documents relating to the business or occupation of such person.
   (III.) Summon and hear witnesses.
4. Every Order issued by a Military Governor to inspect an inhabited house shall be addressed to an officer of the Police Force not below the rank of Commissary or 2nd Lieutenant, and shall direct that, if the owner or person in occupation of the said house shall not consent to the inspection being made, the officer shall be accompanied in making the inspection by the Mukhtar. The procès-verbal drawn up by the officer shall state that the conditions laid down in the clause have been complied with, and the Mukhtar shall sign or seal the procès-verbal.
5. Any stock of foodstuffs in respect of which a false declaration has been made, or in respect of which there has been failure to make a declaration, is liable to be confiscated, and the

Military Governor may, pending a decision of a Military Court, order the sale of the whole or part of any such stock, and the proceeds of sale shall be deposited in the Court of the district.

6. When, in the opinion of the Military Governor, stocks of any foodstuff in any district, town, or village, are being unduly withheld from consumption, all persons within such district, town, or village, may be called upon to sell or dispose of the said stocks in the manner prescribed by him.
7. Save in the case of disobedience to an Order issued under the provisions of this Notice, no person shall be called on to dispose of any foodstuffs reasonably reserved by him for his household requirements or for the use of his animals or for his own use as seed.
8. Any person who fails on demand to give information to an Official of the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration as to the supply of foodstuffs in his possession or under his control, and any person who disobeys an order issued by a Military Governor in virtue of this Notice, shall be liable on conviction by a Military Court to a fine not exceeding L. E. 100 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both those penalties.
9. For the purpose of this Notice "Cereals" shall be deemed to include wheat, barley, maize, millet, beans, and lentils, or any of them, and the "Necessities of life" shall be deemed to include also rice, flour, meat, sugar,

coal, oil, butter, milk, petroleum, benzine and firewood.

L. J. BOLS,
Major-General,
Chief Administrator.

Hdqtrs. O.E.T.A. (SOUTH).
February, 1920.

One day we went a delightful motor run to the place where the British made their final attack on Jerusalem, and it was quite thrilling to be with Sir Louis Bols, one of the men who had participated in that final strategic move. It was still riddled with trenches, and remnants of war lay everywhere; and the imprint of the Turk could be seen on every hand. The Crescent was barely out of place.

And nearby there lies a quiet little convent, with a sweet-faced Roumanian nun who talks exquisite French. She gave us delicious liqueur made by herself and her nuns from fresh almonds, and walked us round her little garden where the narcissi, roses and iris were just struggling into life that early January day.

Every religion is represented in Palestine, and apparently each country builds or tries to build a finer church and hostel than the other country, and then religion eschews its own religion by quarrelling with its neighbour. Was there ever such a quarrelsome land? But the imprint of the British soldier has already had good results.

A point that impressed me greatly was, that with our uniforms everywhere, our law and order noticeable on every side, one never saw a British

flag in Palestine. The Peace Treaty with Turkey being yet unsigned, we had carefully refrained from asserting ourselves or treading upon sensitive feelings in any way. What tact, and yet one wondered if the populace really appreciated our consideration.

A few months later, alas, the country passed from military to civilian rule, and later Great Britain obtained the Mandate. Once there would have been no difficulty in collecting large sums —many millions, in fact—from the people already owning the land. That chance has practically gone by. The Zionist pincers are making themselves felt on the old inhabitants, and month by month the chance of Palestine supporting itself is slipping by.

Palestine is a land of possibilities if enough money is put into it, just as it was the cradle of three great religions: the Jewish, Christian and Mohammedan. But I am jaunting too far ahead, and we must leave the future for a later chapter and merely look at Palestine in the winter of 1919–20.

It was the New Year. The weather was vile. Our host, Sir Louis Bols, was kindness itself. He proffered hospitality in the truest sense. He opened his house (the Kaiser's Palace) to us in the absence of his kindly wife, who had herself arranged our visit, and each day the General promised to motor us to the Dead Sea. No one could be in Palestine and not wish to see the Dead Sea, nestling between the Hills of Moab on the one side and Jericho on the other, with the Jordan

running in straight from Galilee, through which lake it passes after leaving its source in the Lebanons in Syria.

Each day we were disappointed. We started once, but long before reaching Jericho the mud and the rain and the wet were so hopeless that we had to turn back. And before we got home it snowed, yes, snowed.

Thus it was I left Palestine for India without having visited the Dead Sea or the Jordan, but I vowed I would return and see both; and there was yet another inducement. At that delightful old town Hebron, all the people wore the most gorgeous orange (a sort of mandarin yellow) head scarf. I bartered for one in silk, but it cost three pounds, and the man would not take less, so I left Hebron without the precious scarf. For eleven months I regretted not having bought that shawl, and vowed that when I returned to Palestine I would go to Hebron on purpose to procure one of those scarves, which are the most gorgeous shade of orange, and the most beautiful silk I think I have ever seen.

Oh! the persistency of women. Eleven months later I saw the Dead Sea; went to Jericho, and purchased a yellow handkerchief at Hebron.

I left Palestine determined to return, but feeling it was no longer a land of milk and honey, that it was treeless and barren, and that only hard work and solid gold could give it a future of promise.

Just before I left for India that excellent paper, the *Egyptian Gazette*, published the following, December 31, 1919.

Mainly East

A STORY OF THE WAR

General Sir Reginald Wingate's despatch published in a *London Gazette* supplement, dealing with the military operations in the Hedjaz from June 9, 1916, up to the surrender of Medina on January 10, 1919, is among the most interesting records of the war. It describes how when the Arab campaign opened on June 9, 1916, the Turks were to a great extent taken by surprise and the Sherif's forces were successful in capturing Mecca and Jeddah within the first month. The garrison of Taif held out for three and a half months, its eventual capture on September 22, 1916, being very largely due to the support of the Egyptian Artillery detachment under the command of El Lewa Sayed Pasha Ali. Medina was invested immediately, but the presence of a picked force of 3,500 Turks destined for operations in Southern Arabia in connection with the Stotzingen Mission made it too difficult an operation for the Arab forces to carry out, and the city was not captured. This led to a considerable prolongation of operations, as the Turks were enabled to keep open the railway and use Medina as a base from which to threaten Mecca. After referring to the Emir Feisal's active co-operation in 1916, and subsequently leading to the forced withdrawal in January, 1917, of the bulk of the Turkish Hedjaz Expeditionary Force to the neighbourhood of Medina, Sir Reginald Wingate passes on to the famous railway raids upon the Hedjaz Railway in 1918, many of which were conducted by Colonel Lawrence. The object of these raids was to hamper the attempts made by the Turks again to withdraw from the area held by them, and one can remember how well they succeeded. By the success early in 1918 of the Emir Feisal's operations about Maan, the main object of the Southern campaign—the isolation of Medina—was indeed accomplished by the effective destruction of the vital railway communications of Medina with the North. Moreover, the reaction of Feisal's success upon his brothers produced, in emulation, a degree of activity in the southern theatre never hitherto attained, and a determination on their part to undertake the long-deferred combined offensive of Medina, with a view of securing the close and permanent investment of that fortress.

A third despatch, dated December 27, 1918, brings the story

of the penultimate stage in the campaign to a close. The Turks were now so entirely isolated that the operations consisted to all intents and purposes of the siege of a large area militarily dependent upon Medina, for the Turkish garrisons in the Southern Hedjaz, including that of Medina, were entirely cut off from communication with the outside world, with the exception of a single aeroplane despatch, which reached Tebuk from the north about the middle of August, and of infrequent and very irregular supply convoys to Medina from Hail or Riadh. In accordance with this general intention, towards the end of May, Emir Abdulla, supported by strong contingents of the Huteim, Ateiba and Juheima tribesmen, attacked the Wadi Hamdh ridges: but although at the first assault several out-lying advanced posts were captured, the attack failed to develop. A week later a fresh offensive was undertaken further south, in the section between Bir Nasif and Hafira, this time in co-operation with a detachment of Emir Ali's Army, led by the Emir in person; but, again, little more than demonstration was effected, although some 1,000 rails and half a dozen culverts were destroyed by Emir Abdulla's demolition parties. On June 7 a more successful raid was carried out in the neighbourhood of Toweira, in the course of which 1,200 rails, a bridge and three large culverts were demolished and a water train with its locomotive was captured and destroyed by the Arabs. In this operation the losses of the enemy were heavy, and a number of prisoners were taken. At the end of July an offensive was launched by Emir Ali against the Turkish positions at Jelajila, north-west of Medina, but the enemy's defensive works proved too strong to be taken by infantry assault without extensive artillery support, which, owing to difficulties of transport, Ali lacked; and, notwithstanding a determined and praiseworthy effort on the part of the Sherifial troops engaged, Jelajila remained in the hands of the enemy. In the meantime the capture of Mudaw'ra by an Imperial Camel Corps column operating from Akaba, on August 8, and the destruction of the water supply at that place, compelled the enemy to evacuate the railway south of Maan as far as Dhat el Haj, and finally dispelled any hope he may, till then, have entertained of the ultimate communications with Medina from the north.

Mainly East

In spite of the destruction of the Turkish Armies in Syria by General Allenby in September, 1918, Fakhr-ed-din-Pasha refused to surrender Medina, even when guaranteed safe passage to Egypt by General Wingate, and the Hedjaz Army closed in upon the starving but devoted garrison. Although subsequent successes were in one sense rendered abortive by the Armistice with Turkey (October 30, 1918), when all hostilities by the Arabs were at once suspended, General Wingate was able to report on January 18, 1919, that: "Fakhri Pasha, Turkish Commandant at Medina, surrendered to Arab Headquarters at Bir Derbish on the 10th instant. The Emir Abdulla, representing his father the King of the Hedjaz, entered Medina at 11 a.m. on the 13th instant."

Particularly interesting reading in view of later events, and written by a highly distinguished officer, Sir Reginald Wingate, to whom the British Government behaved none too well.

* * * * *

Another Pier Head jump.

It had been necessary at Marseilles when I jumped on to a trooper and drilled with a life-belt, and passed through mine fields; but none of the latter were necessary in the dawn of 1920 from Port Said to Bombay. What was necessary was to wait for the chance of a vacant cabin, and jump into it without dallying to discuss even its enormous price.

I hate people who hate their relatives, don't you? Relations are generally nicer than oneself and twice as useful. In fact, cousins are delightful things. It was so charming to be met at Suez by Jack Tweedie and his launch, so useful to be met at Khartoum by Colonel Car Tweedie, so nice to find

Colonel Sydney Muspratt in Delhi. All useful cousins.

Talking of Port Said, which was once the naughtiest town in the world, it is all light and searchlights to-day, and quite a large, important place.

There were floods everywhere along the Canal in 1919, right up to Port Said, for the water had been let loose to keep out the Turk. So much water was there, that it took a couple of years to get rid of it altogether, although it had gone down enormously when I re-passed six months later, and still more when I saw it for the last time in 1921. Almost an irony to see the water put there to keep out the Turk gradually diminishing, while the Turk himself was gathering strength to attack again, and even more vitally and successfully than before.

CHAPTER VI

LIFE IN INDIAN PALACES—KAPURTHALA

ARRIVING at Bombay was an amusing experience. It was only a few months after Peace had been signed. It was Sunday morning, in January, 1920, and very hot.

I had a cabin on the upper deck, and having told the Captain that I intended to stay a week in Bombay with my son, who I hoped would meet me from the Staff College at Quetta, and that I had ordered rooms by telegram and letter, he had gravely shaken his head, and repeatedly said: "I hope it will be all right."

A knock at my cabin door. There stood that most excellent Captain, an Irishman, Sweeney by name, who cheerfully said: "Let me introduce you to our P. and O. representative, Mr. Gordon."

Before I could say anything Mr. Gordon vouchsafed: "I do not require any introduction to Mrs. Alec Tweedie; we have met before."

Turning to Captain Sweeney, he remarked: "You only told me 'a lady in distress,' but you did not mention the name."

"I *am* a lady in distress," I replied, "because I have no idea where I am going to sleep to-night; but where did we meet?"

" On the trial trip of the *Lusitania*, when you were one of the guests."

To make a long story short, we landed, and he kindly took me in his launch from hotel to hotel in pursuit of a bed—result, nil. Bombay was crammed; officers and families were going backwards and forwards after the war. No one could get in anywhere; my letters and telegrams had had no effect whatever. A wire from my son also notified that he had had the same ill luck from Delhi, where he was on leave waiting for me.

After many hours of fruitless search, I decided to catch the five o'clock train that afternoon to Delhi, because friends who had been on board were going that journey. After Mr. Gordon had kindly fed me at his flat, he motored me all over Bombay —where all the cotton mill hands were on strike— to see its wonderful view, its Tower of Silence, its beautiful Eastern bazaars (burned down a few weeks later). I landed at the station and tendered three five-pound notes to pay for my ticket and the sleeping accommodation already ordered by telephone after luncheon.

The booking clerk looked at the three five-pound notes—and absolutely refused to take them.

" But they are English five-pound notes," I said, knowing that our notes are tender the world over.

" I am very sorry," he said, " but I have never seen anything like them before. I cannot take them."

This brought the war home. This young man in the booking office knew nothing but an English

Bradbury, and a five-pound note and, doubtless, a sovereign, were unknown to him.

What was I to do? Cook's was closed when we landed. It was Sunday. Nothing could be cashed anywhere. My luggage was already in the sleeping car, and my English money was of no value. Incidentally, one's luggage is a constant anxiety; but it is more worry to be without it.

My host luckily stepped into the breach. "I never have any cash," he said, "for we pay everything here by chit (namely, a signed bit of paper), but it so happened that yesterday I went to the bank and drew fifty pounds in rupees, so I will tear home in the car and bring it down before the train starts."

Rather an amusing position for an unfortunate man to have to pay fifty pounds to get rid of a comparative stranger out of Bombay.

Promising myself a more lengthy stay in the city on my return, then arranged for a year later, I departed with a strange black man, called "a bearer," who was to be my servant, guide, philosopher and friend in India.

He proved a thief, and had to be changed within the week.

And I never saw Bombay again; but that is another story.

The night after my arrival in Delhi I had a nine-bob dinner. Yes, I really mean it. A nine-bob dinner.

It was a truly Royal affair, but it seemed strange to make nine curtsies between entering the Viceregal Lodge and leaving it.

"Why was that?" someone may ask.

Well, the procedure was formal. It was a State affair. We all assembled in the drawing-room. There were fifty of us, and the equerries solemnly introduced each man to his particular partner. When this was completed the double doors were flung open, and:

"His Excellency the Viceroy," was announced.

By this time we were all standing in a large circle. Lord Chelmsford went round and shook hands with everyone; we women made our curtsy. That was curtsy No. I.

Lady Chelmsford followed behind the Viceroy, and as she shook hands, we made another curtsy —that was No. II.

Then the dinner was announced and off we walked exactly according to our rank. My rank troubled people in India considerably. I had not got any. I was only a woman. Just an odd sort of woman without a husband whose reflected glory I could attain. Even a Lieutenant's wife in India is Mrs. Lieutenant, just as they used to be in Germany, and no one ever steps above or below his or her rank. No, never. But one and all took me under their wing and gave me a nice little niche of my own, where I had an exceedingly good time and made many delightful friends. But this is a digression and you, good friend, may be hungry for your dinner.

The representatives of our King sat at either side of the middle of the table, on which were handsome vases and beautifully arranged flowers. The Indian servants were in lovely uniforms, and

their pugarees, or turbans, added much to the gaiety of a brilliant scene. After the dinner was over Lady Chelmsford rose, walked slowly backwards into the alcove behind her, and made a solemn curtsy to her husband, His Excellency the Viceroy, who was then standing opposite her with all the gentlemen of the party. As we women followed out one by one, we each passed into this little recess, and made our low bow to His Excellency. That was curtsy No. III.

In the drawing-room several women were taken over to talk to the Vicereine, who sat near a comfortable fire that chilly night. On arriving, and again on leaving her, we curtsied, IV. and V., and after the Viceroy came in, four women were in turn taken to talk to him. Those were my VI. and VII. curtsies.

Lord Chelmsford is a charming man, with a delightful manner, a clever brain and keen interest in Indian affairs, and evidently anxious to do the best he can for everyone. I was very much struck by the then Viceroy's sympathy and ability in the exalted post he held.

He looked most awfully ill in Delhi. Surely it is rather cruel to send men past their first youth to such a climate as India, and then forbid them to leave for five years. Five years is a long spell for younger people, people with less anxiety and less responsibility. Certainly no one ever tried to do his duty more nobly, but Chelmsford was in India in troubled times; the bridge towards Indian Independence was a mighty difficult bridge to cross in safety.

At eleven o'clock Their Excellencies rose. We lined up round the room again as we did before dinner, and they again solemnly walked round and said good-night to each individually in turn, which necessitated an VIII. and a IX. bob. So, you see, it was verily a *Nine-Bob Dinner.*

Truly a most Regal affair.

The Vicereine was particularly pleasant to me. She paints, and paints remarkably well, so we had much in common. India never fully realized what a charming artist and indefatigable worker Lady Chelmsford was. She painted in water colours incessantly. Every free moment from public affairs found her with her brush, and certainly many of her pictures were delightful. She loved the colour of the East, and was particularly happy with her red sandstone buildings, and where is there in India that there is not a red sandstone building ? My own work was not very satisfactory in India. Constant moving and packing up leaves no time for thought or work. The paints had become so dry that they would hardly work at all, the last of the European paper was used up. India had sold out all the pre-war paper and had nothing. Result, much labour and poor results ; but still I stuck to it. *Nil desperandum.*

One has heard so much of the officials of India living in extraordinary comfort that it certainly was surprising to find at Delhi that practically all of them lived in tents.

Don't imagine by this that they were little tiny tents such as a dozen men are squeezed into in war days, because they were more like the big

marquees put up for cricket matches in country villages. But tents they were and nothing but tents, and they stood in streets, the pathway being bordered by little plants; sometimes it was wide enough for a motor car to stop at the tent door, sometimes it was not.

The larger tent is generally the living room, a smaller tent is the dining room; behind are two or three bedrooms, bath tent and kitchen.

When an extra child arrives upon the scene an extra tent is put on. If a friend arrives from Europe for a long visit another tent is dumped down, and so these Eastern homes go on expanding or decreasing according to requirements.

They are made very pretty inside with Oriental carpets; Oriental wall hangings, lamps, piano, sofas and even a fireplace, but at the same time, one cannot make a tent anything but cold in winter and hot in summer.

When officialdom moves from Delhi to Simla, the whole of this Delhi tent township moves too, including babies and prams, official documents and Government papers; so twice a year officialdom is upheaved, and not only travels bag and baggage, but house to boot.

It was near this tentland that the original new Delhi (again to be the capital of India instead of Calcutta) was to be built, and if I mistake not, it was near here that the Prince of Wales, now King George, laid the foundation stone for new Delhi, but the spot that had been chosen proved to be a swamp, and after tinkering at it for some

time it was decided to build the new Delhi seven miles away.

This new Delhi was begun about 1913, and people talk about it being finished in 1925, when there will be twelve square miles of buildings. But as I saw it in 1920 it appeared to be one enormous red brickyard, for bricks were literally being made in millions and run along little light railways to be erected into buildings. A large part of these will be in white stone, marble no longer being possible in these expensive days, but the greater number will be of red brick.

My chief memory—and, alas, this book is entirely written from memory—is little truck-loads of bricks running along between avenues of baby trees, for the roads had already been planned out, and these little trees and shrubs were standing up two and three feet.

The great hall for the Viceroy was then about ten feet high. Otherwise nothing had progressed even as far as that. Sir Edwin Lutyens most kindly showed me round his wonderful new site, but as I could visualize nothing from what had already risen, I had to content myself with the plans and they were certainly beautiful. Mr. Herbert Baker, who had sketched the interiors of these future buildings, is an artist, and he had made absolute pictures of the different edifices.

That was new Delhi. Old Delhi was quite a different affair, or rather, the Old Delhis, for there have been seven of them. Although they have risen and fallen, and the cities have gone, their temples and tombs remain. These Mr. Hailey

kindly devoted many hours to showing me in company with Commander Hilton Young, M.P., who was taking a few weeks' dash round India. The former Viceroy's (Lord Curzon) idea to preserve the old cities of Delhi was exce lent, and has been admirably carried out and greatly extended by that interesting man, Mr. Hailey, Minister of Finance.

The great Mosque of Jama Masjid is one of the finest in India; but many books could be, and have been, written on the glories of Indian architecture. This pen-woman thought the best view of the town was from the Fort looking across to the famous Ridge of the Mutiny.

Oh, the dust and cold of Delhi the whole of February. I had a fire after four o'clock every day, and wore my fur coat constantly. Indeed, I had to buy an eiderdown, and although the sun shone brilliantly for two or three hours at midday, for twenty hours the wind blew the dust in clouds, and it was mighty cold and uncomfortable. This was not my idea what India should be, even in the month of February. When March came, up went the temperature.

I think I met everybody who was anybody in Delhi. Dear, cheery Sir Charles Monro seemed just as cheery, in spite of his important post as C.-in-C., and the Indian heat, as at home. It had made him thinner, but he remained just as merry, and his wife was universally popular.

People were most kind in constantly congratulating me on my son's flight over the Himalayas, and his landing at Simla (nearly eight thousand

feet above sea level) just as a terrific storm burst, and hailstones three inches in circumference damaged the machine as he stepped from it, and before the Royal Buffs, who were in attendance, could get the tarpaulin over the aeroplane. But this had appeared in newspapers all over the world at the time (May, 1919) in Reuter's Service.

Looking back on Delhi with its hot days and cold nights in January and February, a series of charming little dinners passes before my eyes, and little kindnesses such as beautiful flowers to welcome me from the garden of Colonel and Mrs. Verney; artistic suggestions from that artistic being, Mrs. Jack Mackenzie; mending and packing by Mrs. Cecil Kaye—an act much appreciated by the traveller; a cheery welcome by a cousin-man, Colonel Sydney Muspratt, and from another delightful woman, Miss Elinor Anderson, sister of the General Sir Hastings of the Staff College. Then there was the famous General MacMunn, General Sir Harry Watson, General J. C. Rimmington, Sir John and Lady Maffey, Ernest Burden, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, General Sir Herbert Cox, and my son's old commander Colonel MacEwen and his successor, Colonel Webb Bowen.

India is a country for young people to play in, to dance and polo, and tennis and flirt in—morally, however, it is bad for both sexes and does not often lead to happy marriages. Too much comfort, too many servants to start life, extra pay, and too much amusement to induce love of home. It is the land of youth and enjoyment and a riot of gaiety.

Middle-aged people simply don't seem to exist, for the next grade are elderly Generals and Knights, and Baronets and Councillors and Commissioners, all drawing handsome pay and enjoying the royal progress of so-called " Inspections ! "

The most disappointing thing in Delhi was the native bazaar, Chandni Chank. Neither old nor new, picturesque nor pleasing.

Again and again one felt the street life of the Indian bazaars was grey and colourless compared with Cairo, Damascus or Jerusalem. Delhi, Amritsar, Lahore, Agra, and even Bombay took very back seats for wealth of colour and barbaric quaintness.

The next move was quite exciting to look forward to—a week's visit to an Indian Palace.

After a long journey from Delhi, it was interesting to step forth in the cool air of the early morning at Jullunda Station, there to find a motor of His Highness the Maharajah of Kapurthala awaiting us. When he had kindly asked me to visit him at his Palace, remembering our former meeting in London, he had thoughtfully suggested that he would be glad to see my son, who he knew was in India, if he cared for some shooting, but unfortunately Harley was unable to accompany me as his leave was up and he had to return to the Staff College at Quetta, several days' journey away.

But with that wonderful courtesy one receives in India, the Maharajah wrote again, and said as I was strange to his country, if I liked to bring a lady with me he would be very pleased to welcome her.

Consequently, charming and pretty Mrs. Kaye accepted the invitation and we travelled together. Such an arrival—for there was her bearer and my bearer, and her luggage and my luggage, and piles of bedding, and all the rest of the paraphernalia that we required for our journey.

As we drove to the Palace, the most extraordinary mists were rising. It was six o'clock in the morning, and only people who know India know the extraordinary hues of orange and purple, of indigo and cobalt, of rose madder and burnt sienna, that seem to flit across the landscape in the mists and miasmas of early morning.

Arrived at the Guest House, which had been entirely placed at our disposal, we were met, even at that early hour, by an Indian in a frock coat with an immaculate piece of white picot inside the lapels; in fact dressed as though he were going to Ascot on Cup Day. In perfect English, he said:

"I welcome you in the name of His Highness the Maharajah of Kapurthala, and I am to ask you if there is anything you would particularly like to do during your visit here."

I thought a moment, and then laughingly said: "One thing I must do, and that is to ride on an elephant."

"There is no difficulty about that," he calmly replied. He called various servants, and solemnly we were each shown a little suite of rooms, asked when and how we would like our breakfasts, informed that the Maharajah did State business all the morning, but that we should see His

Highness at the luncheon hour; and after this cordial and very ceremonial welcome, the Master of Ceremonies departed.

Mrs. Kaye and I had our baths, had just enjoyed breakfast and were still enjoying some delicious fruit, when a servant entered to ask if we could see the Master of Ceremonies again.

"Certainly."

In he came.

"Your elephant is at the door, Mrs. Alec Tweedie," he said.

I almost gasped. Life ceases to be interesting when one ceases to care who or what is at the door. One is accustomed to hear that the taxi is at the door, but not to hear "your elephant is at the door."

We have just so much capacity for enjoyment or suffering—each individual differently—and when the limit of suffering is reached and one ceases to care who comes in at the door, life has become numb, valueless and void.

"What elephant?" I said.

"You expressed a wish, Madam, to ride an elephant, and one of His Highness' elephants is waiting your orders at the door."

It really was very funny, and I could not help turning to Mrs. Kaye and saying: "What on earth are we to do with the elephant?"

"Go for a ride on it," she laughed. "What else?"

But we were not fully dressed, and had had a very long journey, and it seemed rather hurrying matters I suggested.

"Well," she replied, "we must either go now, for it is eight o'clock or else we won't be able to go at all until the sun is down, for it will be getting hotter all the time."

Accordingly, we finished our toilets, and went to the elephant that was waiting under the huge portico at the door, looking wonderingly at his enormous height, while the *major domo* and the Mahout arranged our route. The elephant was told to kneel down, which, with a huge grunt, she did; we walked up a little ladder, arranged ourselves upon her back, and off we went for a ride through the bazaars of Kapurthala on this rumbling great beast's back. That was my first elephant ride in India, and an interesting experience.

The obedience of the elephants to the kick behind the ears by their groom, or the prod on the head with the fork of the Mahout, was wonderful, for these great lumbering things move exactly as they are wanted.

There is no doubt about it that an elephant is an extraordinary beast, and that the amount of Hindustani it understands is wonderful.

Of course, the Mahout thinks that his elephant comprehends every word that he says, as he sits on the animal's neck with his little bare legs tucked behind her ears, and digs his naked toes into her skin as he cajoles her to go to the right or the left, or feebly scratches her with his toe nails. In fact his pats, his cajolerie or his curses are quickly obeyed, and it is very seldom he has to use force to make his charge do exactly what he wishes.

He keeps up one long continued conversation

with his elephant, and there is no doubt that elephant and man become staunch friends.

They say elephants have amazing memories; that they suffer when they lose a faithful keeper, and if that keeper returns to them many years afterwards, they know him again in a moment by his voice or his touch.

An elephant who will behave perfectly well with one man may behave very badly with another, and yet when the old controller returns, the elephant's virtue returns too.

A few days later, there was a magnificent display of elephants in the Palace Grounds, partly in our honour, and the opportunity was seized to have some photographs of the pageant taken.

It really was a splendid sight, for, although our host has not anything like the finest elephants, or the most numerous, they were very magnificent when they were painted all over with grotesque colours and designs, bearing their wonderful back cloths and howdahs, and anything more dignified than the Maharajah himself in bright blue velvet embroidered in gold, sitting in his massive silver howdah, with a servant behind him holding an umbrella of State over his head, cannot well be imagined.

I cannot say that riding an elephant is a particularly comfortable performance any more than riding a camel. Although both jiggle and shake, the latter is not at all bad when the camel can be persuaded to trot. The trotting camels of Egypt are rather rare, but extremely pleasant when one gets one.

Life in Indian Palaces—Kapurthala

H.H. The Maharajah of Kapurthala besides being cultured, well read and much travelled, is a very dignified looking man. He is tall and handsome, and although he speaks faultless English, he is French in many of his tastes and in some ways cosmopolitan.

He lives in a beautiful Palace. It is absolutely French in style, both inside and out; the very last thing one would expect to find in the Punjab of Northern India.

The view across the gardens and park of the Himalayas is beautiful, and I thoroughly enjoyed my week of his hospitality.

How wonderful they looked, those Himalayas, from my window, just a glimpse of that 1,500-mile chain of mountains, but enough of their snow-capped summits showing to make one look forward to a few weeks later when I was to spend months among the summer glories of Kashmere. These gardens and park were laid out by an Englishman. The excellent band of thirty musicians is conducted by an Englishman. His cooks are French and Indian. At luncheon, several Indian dishes were always served; but at dinner they were more French. Old English silver is used at table, the flowers are arranged in English vases—in fact the atmosphere is chiefly English or French. Kapurthala is a connecting link between the East and the West.

Married in his youth to four wives (whom he never saw, according to Indian custom), the Maharajah, when he grew older, found a beautiful young Spanish girl, about 1905, whom he did see and

married, and lived with her happily for a dozen years or more. But this did not mean he neglected his other wives when he was in India. These ladies lived harmoniously together in their own Palace, each in her own apartments, called upon every day by the Maharajah when he is at Kapurthala.

The No. I. Indian Princess takes precedence, and her son is the Crown Prince, who was educated at Harrow, and his wife in Paris. Result: one wife, and one happy home. This wife of the Ticka Ranee, as the Crown Prince is called, is a perfectly lovely and charming girl. Fair of skin, for she comes from the mountains. She has three little girls.

The Maharajah has four sons and one daughter, all of whom have been brought up in England. He himself was educated in India by a delightful English tutor who I met at the Palace with his wife.

How rapidly in some ways the East is assimilating the West, with its education, its cinemas and habits. For instance, except in public, His Highness leaves his head uncovered. His religion is Sikh, an offshoot of the Hindu.

In spite of his spending several months in Europe every year to avoid the great heat, which he finds most trying, there appears to be perfect peace in Kapurthala, so wisely has he chosen the officials who carry on the affairs of State during his absence.

There are about three hundred princes in India, but only fifty of these are big, and only about five are of first importance. The Nizam of Hyderabad heads the list. He is only about thirty years of age, but is so occupied with his native luxury

and his harem that he does not entertain foreigners, travel, or mix with Europeans. The very opposite of Baroda, Kapurthala and Gwalior.

As far as I know, no Indian prince pays taxes, or customs, and yet every British subject in India has to pay both; but India would take years to understand, and one is constantly being surprised by little bits of information such as the fact that there are six hundred and seventy-six states, and, as to the number of guns used in salute to the different Maharajahs, well—that would take a lifetime to understand.

The position of the Indian Princes is more or less dependent on Great Britain. If Great Britain withdrew her strong support, the native would probably turn against himself, and Bolshevism and chaos would ensue.

About twenty-five per cent. in Russia are literate, only about five per cent. in India. They are children, native children, children of the soil, those millions of people of India, with a tiny and sometimes noisy froth at the top who want to reform everyone and everything except themselves apparently, but they are bagatelle among so many.

On the other hand, there are educated gentlemen who have succeeded in many cases so admirably that one is struck dumb with admiration at their attainment, but one swallow does not make a summer.

When one goes to an Indian bazaar, the native asks exactly three times what he expects to get for his wares. When India asks for complete Independence, she neither wants nor expects more

86089

than internal Independence. Where would India or Egypt be without the protection of our army and our navy? Neither could have stood alone for one moment against Germany.

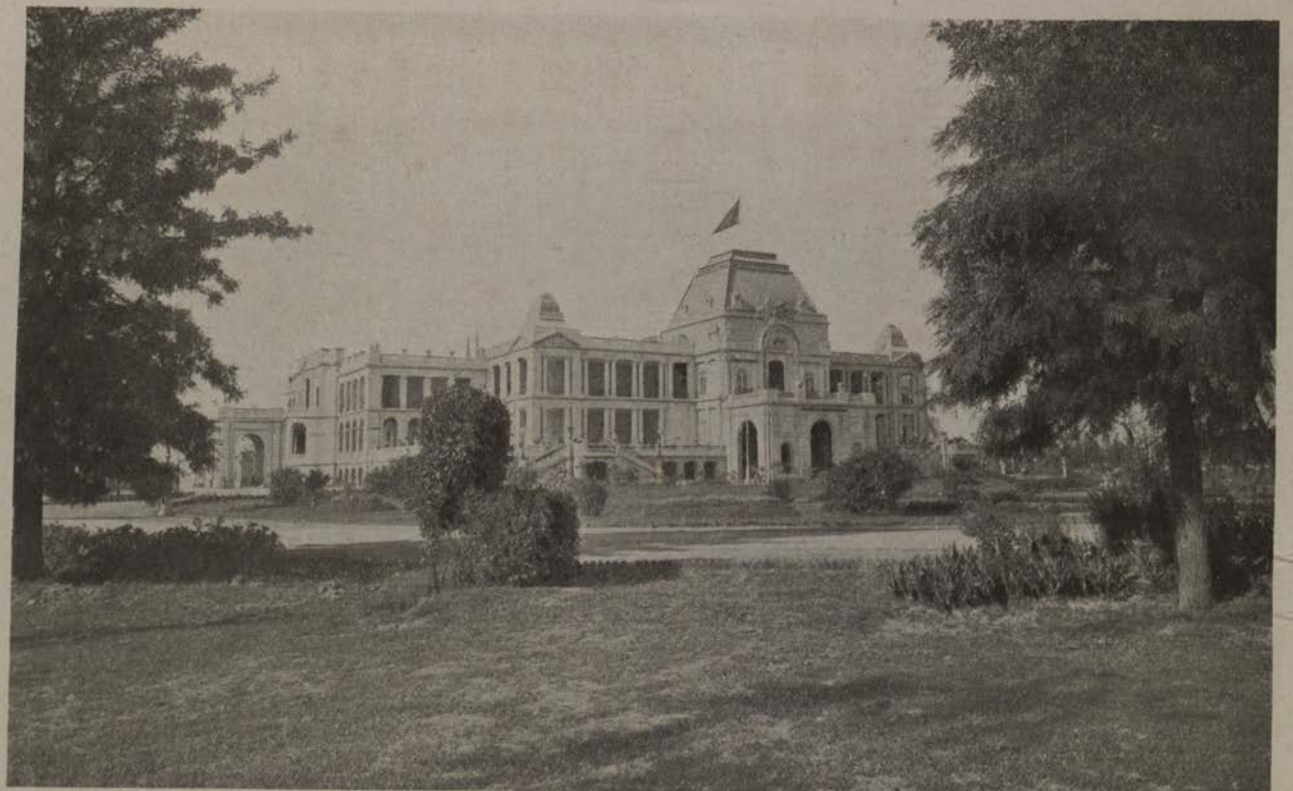
One day at Kapurthala, I was suddenly transplanted back to the British Isles. We went off in a motor launch with a tea basket to the river at Kap. For miles it might have been the Cam at Cambridge, and then another stretch was sandy and low and trackless in truly Indian style. The trees were so planted as to copy an English scene, and well indeed did the illusion succeed.

Blackbirds weighed down trees, literally pulling the boughs into the water, there were such hundreds of them, and kingfishers were everywhere.

My dominant recollections of Kapurthala are the views of the Himalayas, the curious anomaly of the French château in the Punjab, the Gymkhana where camels were roped instead of horses, and the populace squatting below the royal stand looked exactly like a flower garden, so beautiful were the shades of their turbans.

Many of these people went off to the cinemas in the evening, for cinemas are everywhere and, unfortunately, too little discretion is used in the selection of films, and white people are often shown at their very worst to native audiences.

Particularly was this the case in Southern Sudan before an audience of several thousand natives, squatting in the sand, with the vault of heaven above their heads. They yelled and shrieked in many tongues while a white man and woman wrestled on the floor—a pitiable spectacle.



The Great French Palace of H.H. The Maharajah of Kapurthala, Punjab.

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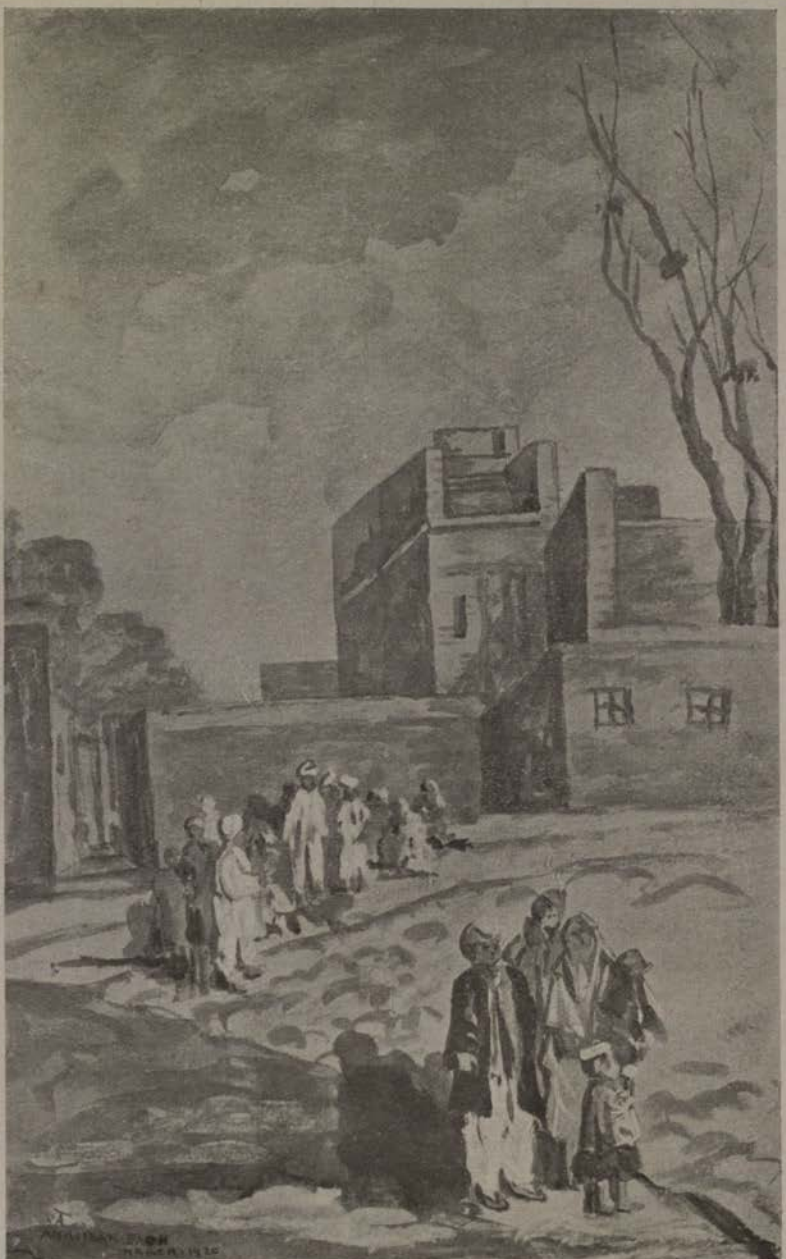


Amritsar, "Julianwallah Bagh," Punjab, where 370 rebels were shot after warning against riotous meetings, 1919. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie

All that is best should be placed before these unlettered peoples—not theft and larceny, and vulgarity and immorality.

An enormous opportunity for Education is now lost. The audience should be shown the greatness of the British Empire. Ships, trains, factories, fine buildings, how trades are worked, anything and everything to expand their minds, not things lowering their exalted idea of the White Sahib or Mem Sahib. Most of the horrible films in the East should be relegated to the paper basket. They are a sink of iniquity.

Amritzar

Naturally, being only about fifty or sixty miles from the famous Jullianwallah Bagh, I asked the Maharajah of Kapurthala to motor me to Amritzar to see the spot where the firing had taken place a few months previously; so early one morning off we went with his military secretary.

We drove along that famous road which stretches from the north to the south of India, nearly two thousand miles, made by Great Britain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with its four rows of shady trees on either side. This is but one of the many wonderful things my countrymen have done for that country.

Arrived at Amritzar, which is an unprepossessing manufacturing town, we saw the bank where the two Englishmen had been murdered. We saw the Town Hall that had been burned down, and passed several places where there had been trouble

for weeks. We saw the corner where the Englishwoman had been molested, all of which events had happened in the weeks previous to the final riots, which riots took place after a proclamation had been issued that if the natives continued in their pernicious and unruly practices, and continued to hold mass meetings, the troops would fire upon them, as law and order must be restored.

Arrived at one of the several little roads that led into the Bagh, the military secretary kindly went in to find the way. He returned with a somewhat anxious expression upon his countenance as he said :

" I really don't think you ought to go there, the feeling is very anti-British. You are an English woman, and the Indians are rather antagonistic just now. They wish to make this the most sacred shrine of India."

" Oh, but I must see it," I replied. " I have come all this way on purpose to sketch it. I won't hurt anyone."

" But suppose someone hurts you ? " he said.

However, after a good deal more conversation of a like nature, I insisted on picking up the camp stool and the paint bag (that ugly little black canvas affair that caused so much chaff from my friends) and in we went.

The Bagh is a large, open space about twice the size of Trafalgar Square, and what can be best described as a rubbish heap. The name " Bagh " denotes a garden, but there is no garden about it. It looks exactly like a dumping ground of old grey bricks, which it really is ; an ugly spot, bare and bleak.

There are several entrances, and not one, as some people have tried to make out, and it is surrounded by houses. It must be remembered the populace had been plundering for days. They were warned. Again and again the people were told to desist.

On the day of the famous rioting, April, 1919, almost a year before my visit, when the natives insisted on assembling in this place against all orders, three hundred and seventy of the three thousand or four thousand present were killed. There were no machine guns. There were neither women nor children. They were a collection of rebels and of the worst kind, agitators against law and order, and had General Dyer's action been upheld by the British Parliament at home, the death penalty of those three hundred and seventy men would probably have stopped all further trouble in India, especially if it had been coupled with the arrest of Gandhi. Instead of which, many thousands of rioting Moplars were killed later ; hundreds were killed in Bombay riots, even more in Calcutta and various other parts all over India. In fact, the death roll since has been a sad one because that lesson, given to emphasize the necessity of law and order, was blamed instead of praised.

This was another of those regrettable instances where home people, knowing nothing of what led up to events, dictate policy. Officials in and out of India so believed in General Dyer's wisdom that they subscribed twenty or thirty thousand pounds in small sums as an offering of gratitude for his courage. This brilliant soldier (whom, by the by, I have never met) would not accept it personally,

and handed it over to the relatives of those who were killed.

It seems terrible to anyone who has travelled, or is travelling, that folk at home, and papers at home, should criticize things they know nothing about, and these ridiculous " Inquiries " (nearly a year after the event) do a vast amount of harm to everyone concerned. Surely Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the brilliant Governor of the Punjab, and General Dyer, the famous soldier in command, must have understood a situation they were literally living amongst better than a lot of men at Westminster, or those in newspaper offices who think they can criticize and dictate.

I was in India and the Middle East in very troubled days; it always seemed the same everywhere, the people themselves begged for a strong administration; the minority, composed of Socialistic youths, were merely discontented agitators crying for the moon.

Great Britain had been looked up to and revered for her wise administration in all these lands, and would never have fallen from her pedestal if Members of Parliament at home, and sensationalistic newspapers, hadn't done their best to knock her off. The whole world is a seething pot of discontent.

But again I must apologize for being political, and we—you and I—must get on with our jaunt or we shall never reach the Dardanelles.

Down I squatted, and at a tremendous pace, and on the back of a piece of paper that had once been the mount of a photograph, I sketched that

Julianwallah Bagh. It was my very last piece of paper; the sun was getting hotter every moment; the natives round me, who seemed very threatening at first, gradually became interested in the process, and in the half-hour I was there they became quite friendly.

It is wonderful what a fascination a bit of colour-paint has for the folk of every country, and how they love to see a house or tree they know depicted; so with a little friendly smile they soon became friendly themselves, too friendly, for they pressed around the helpless painter in a very uncomfortable manner.

There were one or two leafless trees at the back of the houses surrounding the so-called garden, and upon them were clusters of mistletoe which seems to grow regardless of climate more or less all over the world.

Amritzar is the commercial town of the Punjab. It is a miserable spot, with just one gem. That is the Golden Temple set in the water which reflects all its wondrous hues.

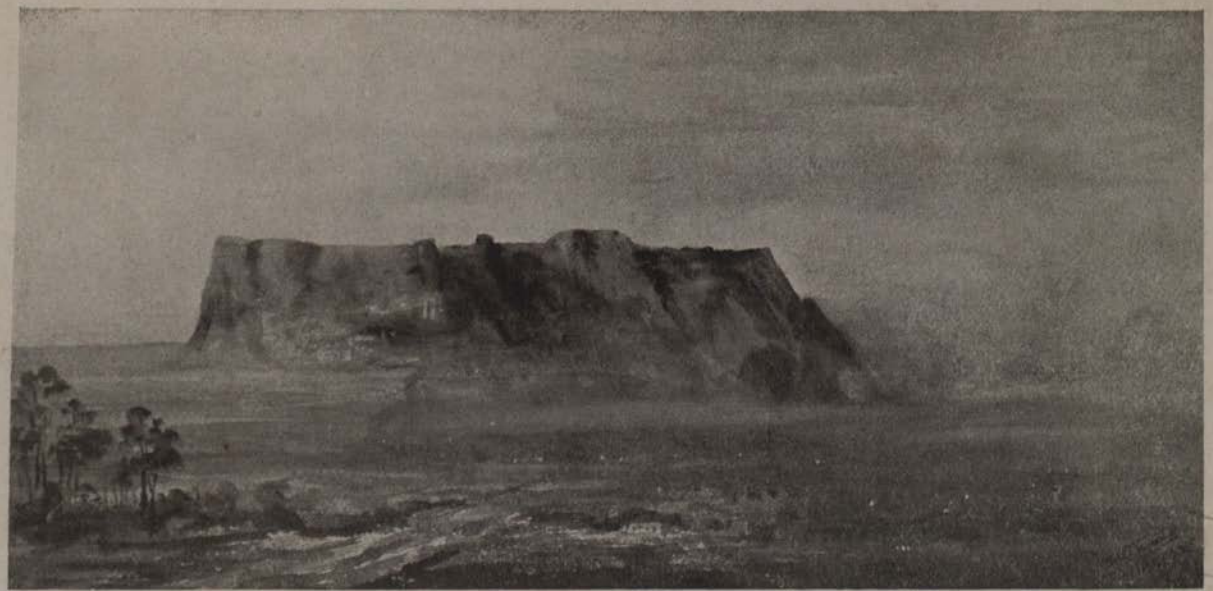
The town is a nasty place to my mind, dirty, untidy and ill-kept. There were no drains and no manners, very smelly and with thoroughly artistic bazaars made picturesque by gorgeously-coloured hanging rags. The Mohammedan women were wound round in white sheets, and looked exactly like clothes' bags with a gauze bit in front of their faces about four inches by two through which they could peep out. A sort of muslin window in front.

What a contrast between Amritzar and Lahore.

The latter with fine roads and fine buildings, and some attempt at sanitation, and the former an Indian town only a few miles away in all the crude primitiveness of hundreds of years ago.

The Indian cannot rule or civilize himself any more than the Egyptian. He is a good follower but a bad leader.

The Fort at Lahore was one of the finest bits of work I saw—the jewelled walls, real talc and looking-glass and coloured stones worked into mosaic was lovely, and it is in an excellent state of preservation. Standing high, commanding a fine view, with its empty moat below, Lahore is a fine, large, modern open city, but its Temple does not compare with the Golden Temple of Amritzar.



" Gwalior Fort " (Central India). At sundown all Indians cook their own food in little pots, and the soft rising smoke makes the scene look like water or mist. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie, in possession of Viscountess Chelmsford. *See page* 141.

[*To face p.* 108.

"Crocodile shooting on the Ganges." From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie.

CHAPTER VII

CROCODILE SHOOTING ON THE GANGES

IT sounded lovely and warm and interesting, and full of experiences. Mid-February in India should be warm and cheery.

"There won't be mosquitoes," someone kindly remarked, "but it will be very hot; take a sun umbrella, your topee, and don't forget coloured glasses. It is sometimes very cold at night by contrast, so also take thick rugs, a hot-water bottle and a fur coat." All orders were obeyed.

Off we went by train from Delhi to Garhmukhtesar and four miles by trolley to the river.

WEATHER:

1st day, cold and windy.

2nd day, colder and windier.

3rd day, unspeakably cold and threatened rain.

4th day—well, the less said about the cold and misery of that day the better; but a cheery party makes everything cheery, and the trip was most enjoyable from start to finish, thanks to our hosts, Colonel and Mrs. Cecil Kaye. I loved every moment of it.

Naturally, crocodiles (muggars) were the objective, so we were laden with guns and rifles and

field-glasses, everything necessary for shooting muggars, in fact.

SPORT:

1st day, saw one baby crocodile and missed it at long range.

2nd day, saw one muggar bobbing in and out of the water; stalked it for an hour, and never got a shot. They don't like cold and rain, and cannot sun themselves on the banks, so they simply disappear from view.

3rd day, the sun actually came out for an hour, and so did several muggars, all huddled together. Stalked the brutes, fell into a quicksand, got thoroughly wet, and missed the muggars.

"We never have weather like this," said the kindest of hosts. Of course not. Wherever one goes in the world, everyone always says, "The weather is quite extraordinary," so hot, or cold, or wet, or something.

Those miles and miles of white sandbanks looked dull and drear. The Sacred Ganges was a sorry sight. Everything can look hideous in the wrong light; anything can be beautiful at the right hour of the day or night. Duck got up a mile off and flew far ahead of us down stream, as if to tantalize the guns. The stream flowed about three miles an hour, and two Indian oarsmen (continually changed) sat perched up in the bow, and steered us along with the current, or struggled in mid-stream, or ceased rowing while the men behind jumped out and waded, or shoved or hauled over nasty sandy points—all very interesting and picturesque. But where were the

muggars ? None were stupid enough to come out of the water for the pleasure of gazing on so cheerless a world.

Corner after corner of the river we turned, to find it a little colder, or duller, or windier, but devil a bit a muggar. All the field-glasses in the world could not find them ! Never mind. It wasn't the slightest good grumbling. We were miles from anywhere—miles from a train, or a telegraph, or a motor car, miles from anything and everything in fact, so we just told stories and huddled under the canvas roof of our barge round a little charcoal fire-pot, or got out and walked a bit when the sun came out to try and get warm.

I sketched when it was possible, and the cook cooked when it was impossible, as native cooks always manage to do, under the most amazing circumstances.

Beautiful Daisy Kaye had forgotten nothing, and so we had three or four-course meals produced from nowhere, and out of nothing apparently, by her genius and the cook's proficiency. So we enjoyed the pleasures of the table, even if we could not follow the pleasures of the chase.

Every evening before nightfall we hove-to on some bank, and before one could say " Boo ! " the four tents were up. It was always done in half an hour. One for the Kayes, one for my son, and one for myself, and a fourth one for the men. Camp beds, chairs, tables, tin baths and boiling water (started hours before in old kerosene tins in the cook-boat), lamps, and rugs

for our feet, were all ready in a twinkling. Nothing was forgotten. It was camping in luxury. Every man knew his job and did it. Two of the crew were practised tent pitchers, and really the rapidity with which they handled the canvases and the pegs was a treat to see. They never said a word, yet they worked in such harmony; the two were almost like one man with four hands.

Hardly was the camp fire lighted between the tents to keep off jackals, and other friendly beasts, than night fell like a pall, and only those who have seen the darkness of the East or South can realize what the wonders of those nights can be. My son's shikari was a wild hunter-man who had great power over animals, and by some weird cry he could collect jackals from all sides who really came right up to him, wild beasts though they are.

At one of the places we camped at, several strange Hindus appeared from nowhere—just to stare at us, and listen open mouthed and open eyed at the gramophone. When I went to sleep at night they were sitting on their haunches round the blazing camp fire, the root of a large tree we carried with us. When I got up in the morning they were still sitting on their haunches, exactly in the same position and just as silently round the embers of that fire.

One was a yellow ragged priest. In the evening he refused the gift of a rupee; he refused food, he refused to move, he refused to go away, but the next morning, after eight or nine hours' solemn contemplation of the flames, he announced he wanted a coat, a real English coat.

" Could the Sahib oblige him with a real proper coat with two sleeves and with real proper pockets." This personage was most picturesque, although shabbily swathed in apricot yellow rags, showing his bare skin at every corner.

This coat could not be given, as no one had an extra garment; but finally an old blanket was handed to the poor shivering creature. He refused to take it, but eventually consented to " remove " it, if the Sahib would kindly leave it on the ground. The Sahib did so, and later we watched the leper priest without either fingers or toes pick up and bear off the blanket. That man washed himself every morning in the icy cold water of the Ganges to cleanse his sins, and shivered for the rest of the day. We saw people doing this incessantly, singly or in dozens, in the dreary cold of those February days. How humanity suffers for its religion, and how gladly.

If the cold and the damp were amazing for India, the cooking was thrilling for anywhere. In the servants' boat was the cook-man (*bobberjee*) who produced perfectly prepared fare with old tin petrol cans, bits of charcoal and apparently nothing but a few native pots. Below was a day's fare.

Breakfast.—Fried fish, chip potatoes, eggs and bacon, coffee, marmalade and toast. This we had before leaving the bank.

Luncheon.—We always took cold luncheon along with us in our boat which the cook-man prepared beforehand, such as partridge pie with perfect puff paste, so perfect that it flew away in scales in the wind.

Cold mutton, beetroot with excellent mustard sauce, mince pies, cheese biscuits, butter and cake.

Dinner.—Our tentland meal was composed of five courses every night, waited upon by our three bearers (or body servants) who washed plates outside the tent so dexterously that one never noticed we only had about half a dozen in the camp. They might have been highly trained London butlers, so perfect was their waiting.

Menu.—Soup; fish with excellent sauce; roast sirloin, cauliflower with another good sauce, mustard paste and potatoes; pudding; savoury of egg and anchovy.

Every gravy and sauce was excellent, and it was all prepared in a space about one yard square with an awful wind blowing, in the bottom of a flat-bottomed boat. Amazing men.

And the whole thing was dished up and served in our own tents before our own camp fire within an hour of our pulling-to alongside the bank. And, as if that were not enough, the cook-man made excellent coffee and always had hot water ready for baths.

Incidentally, Ganges water is a difficulty and always has to be specially prepared for use.

Certainly the Britisher has brought camping in India to perfection, but he cannot be master of the weather or the sport, alas. I never saw a more perfectly arranged "bundabust," and, my friend, I've done a bit of camping in Iceland, Morocco, Finland, Mexico, the Argentine and other

places. India takes the palm for trained camp servants and comfort.

These Indian servants are like deaf people, they always understand when least expected. One wonders why, and yet it is easy. They are not straining to hear anything, are not nervous or fussed, and so like the deaf man, the native seems to comprehend by instinct.

Once when we got out for a stretch after dusk, we found between thirty and forty nice little earthenware basins, quite whole. What were they ?

The shikari (or huntsman) said they had been used for a marriage feast. It was near a ferry. People had therefore come from both sides of the river and held the Hindu festival on the banks of the Ganges. A ferry is a favourite site for weddings.

At this ferry, although the marriage was over, we saw a wondrous scene. Four weird men in reddy-yellow rags got out of a boat, each with a long pole across his shoulders and large red spotted yellow bundles hanging at either end. They were snake charmers of this weird land. Down they popped while we waited for house-boat, servants' boat, and cook's boat to pick us up.

These men blew their cheeks out till they nearly burst, as they too-tooed on their pipes, and out of the baskets now unrolled from the red clothes, slowly, very, very slowly, emerged the heads of cobras, and several other forms of snakes.

There sat the four men in a row. There stood the four baskets, and there facing them were the heads of the snakes.

It was too dull and drear to photograph this weird party, miles from anywhere, but their unruly long hair, their thin, half-starved naked bodies, their endless bead necklaces, and the actual savagery of their mien was quite thrilling. They were as weird and mysterious and enigmatic as some clothed men and women of the West. Those strange shivering Indians appeared happy.

Suffering teaches more than gold. Money ruins more homes than poverty.

This was real India. India away from anywhere or anyone. To see the real life of the people one has always to get away to the wilds and leave civilization behind. That was why this week on the Ganges was so full of interest and charm.

One often wonders in India why so many people, men and children, go nude. Is it poverty or choice? A boy up to ten is often seen with nothing on but two tapes. A black thing round his neck, and a black one on or just below his little tummy. He always has a very big tummy, and it is universally suggested the lower band is to stop him eating too much rice and . . . here we draw a veil. From both bands often hangs a charm.

And the muggars? Oh, yes, I had really forgotten them. Where were the muggars? Echo where? I had often seen them in South America and Mexico—but not on the Ganges, and later saw them in thousands, as you will learn, in Southern Sudan. Where were the Ganges muggars? Where?

As we could not shoot, our host and hostess regaled me with stories of the great age to which

crocodiles live, and how not long before one had been killed and opened that contained a necklace from the age of the Moguls, or about the time of Queen Elizabeth. The beast had probably eaten it as an " antique " and become its museum of preservation for a spell.

The crocodile is a man-eating brute. He is a danger. Rarely is one shot without finding beads, necklaces, glass bangles, copper nose-rings or coins inside him. The sad part is that he seizes and kills children to eat them, and if he gets a chance grown men and women fall to his jaws.

Another wretched beast is the village pariah dog. He may be good as a scavenger, but he is a wild, half mad, starved hideous brute, and often dangerous. We laughed over trifling jokes, which, after all, are often the most enjoyable, just as small ills and plain truths are the least endurable. Congenial brains act as the sweetest tonic in life, while nature-study and rest are the best bromides; but it was ridiculous to sit on a Ganges barge, huddled up in eiderdowns to try—not to succeed—but to try and keep warm, peeping over the top with field-glasses to find the brutes who were trying to keep warm also at the bottom of the river.

Once on the river bank we chanced upon a cart, drawn by a couple of buffaloes; the reeds were being piled from the cart to make a pyre for a Hindu cremation. It was a miniature haystack to look at, and inside it the dead person would be cremated. He would be burned in this primitive way in the open, and then cast into the sacred

river. In England the body would not be touched by flame, but condensed or dried by heat till nothing remained but a pure white ash; that ash would be buried or cast to the winds, or placed in a little casket in a cloister or church, as preferred.

This funeral pyre of reeds, however, would be lighted round the corpse, where they would be left to burn themselves out. No one remains while that happens, the relatives and friends only return when the corpse is already destroyed to throw what remains of it into the Ganges.

The Hindus show their intense wisdom by returning their dead to ash, and the desire of every good Hindu is to have his ashes thrown into the Ganges that they may float to Heaven, and all those who die within reasonable distance of the shores of this mighty river are cremated upon its banks. Every few hundred yards one seemed to see the remnants of a cremation.

There was nothing left of consequence but some of the little red earthenware saucers that had once held light, or larger ones that had once held food, and remnants of the sacred rites performed before and after the cremation, which they place round the body. The wick floating on oil of the smaller pots is lighted to keep away the evil spirits during the process of purification. These little pots are rather larger than a night light, made of brown clay, and are of no value, but according to the wealth of the family, so the number employed. In the evening one could see the twinkle of these weird little lights all along the river bank, where some body was being purified by fire before its

ashes were floated away on the water of the Ganges to the open sea.

It is all very primitive, very sanitary, very wise, aye, and it is romantic too: ashes cast on to that quickly-flowing stream to pass along half of India and finally find their way into the broad ocean.

Could anything be more beautiful than this idea?

Indeed, it seems extraordinary that the whole world is not cremated. One shudders to think of the horrors of earth burial. One dare not look into the future of a cemetery which generally ends in decay above ground as well as decay below ground. In Great Britain, cemeteries are often so derelict that buildings are put up on them and no respect whatever is vouchsafed to the dead below.

In cremation it is otherwise. The white ash is symbolic of purity and what is more delightful than to think of the "Garden of Rest" appertaining to every crematorium where the last of those we love can be scattered among the flowers and the shrubs.

Ethically, cremation is beautiful. Sanitarily, earth burial is detestable and from such ancient peoples as the Hindus or the Romans one can learn much in the way of the disposal of one's dead.

Talking about the safety of earth burial, just look at the little place called Sidestrand in Norfolk, one of those many villages which are slowly but surely disappearing into the sea. Most of the churchyard has already done so, and consequently, visitors enjoying their summer's holiday can pick up complete skulls, jaw bones with teeth in them,

or other bits of humanity on the seashore while bathing, and even see the remnants of coffins still sticking in the cliffs. So much for the safety and permanence of earth burial.

Life is a great game—death a great gamble.

As we floated and rowed on down the river, we passed many adjutant birds. Tall, stately, black and white storks with red legs, and sacred as scavengers. Sand grouse ran along the low-lying dreary banks, and endless tall-legged spoonbills. Every now and then up popped a porpoise or a turtle, or an enormous fish eagle pounced upon its prey. There was plenty of wild life—monkeys played about in the trees, and there were humming birds of every hue. Round the villages wild pampas grass flourished; the houses were mud; not mud-baked bricks, but mud-plaster, and thatched with rush mat roofs.

An old Hindu man was sitting on his haunches reading a book at one of the villages.

"Do you like reading?" inquired the sahib.

"I cannot really read it, but I like to sit and look at it."

That is the Indian all over, he can just sit, or rather squat on his heels and wait—wait for eternity. No one will ever understand the Oriental mind, either high-class or low-class, who has not lived with it, it is pretty difficult even then; yet Downing Street, with only one man who has been in the East, hopes to tackle the Oriental away from the Foreign Office. Absurd.

At one place we came to a bridge of boats; the boats lay side by side and were completely

matted over so dexterously that the brown matting looked like a road. They didn't seem as if they had often been disturbed, but two of them had to be moved for our little procession of boats to pass through. As usual the people told us they had just seen crocodiles, and we were sure to find some round the next corner. This was the universal story—but it never came true. However, the three sportsmen got out again and stalked along the bank for a couple of hours and neither got nor saw anything. Dud shooting days; but every hour was of interest to me.

It was our last day and we were all feeling rather depressed at not having got one single muggar when the cook-boat, which had been following more slowly behind came up—AND—attached to the cook-boat by a string and floating in the water, was a dead muggar. They had picked it up and brought it gleefully along.

But, truth to tell—in all humility be it added—it had not been shot by our party, and it was the only crocodile we got on that shooting expedition on the Ganges.

Strange fate. A few days later, only three miles from Delhi, without any elaborate bundabust and on his flat feet, my son shot a muggar eleven feet seven inches long.

Here let me add a word of advice. Every young officer in India is encouraged to shoot muggars. First, he does so for the sport, but secondly he is told the enormous price the skins fetch in England. They don't. On my son's return from the East he brought over twenty

properly (and expensively) dressed skins. They were landed into the hall of my flat. Muggars are not small, remember, and these cases were large. Sell them? Not a bit of it. They were either too big or too small, or there was a drug in the market or something.

Eventually in despair, for flats are not places for such impediments, they went to an auction room and fetched seven shillings and ten shillings each. So much for muggars.

It was the fifth evening. The last day—and the dead muggar was our bag.

Before night came on we arrived at a village literally aflame. The sky was red and yellow and orange, as if to mock us or wish us good-bye. Sugar cane was being boiled in cauldrons and the flames from the cane and the fires, and the smoke and the sunset all mixed up together, gave the most weird and wonderful and flaming effect anyone could imagine.

Nearby we pitched our tents, or rather our men did, while we looked and marvelled at the open-air molasses factory. There were four vats in which the sugar-cane was boiled with water. From vat to vat it passed, getting thicker and thicker in the process, until at last concentrated, and put into jars. It was all cleverly arranged by the natives in a series of vats, each smaller than the other. As the stuff congealed it was passed down through little wooden troughs by huge ladles worked by men from one vat to the other. As it thickened it looked almost like black tar.

The dried cane was piled high behind these

primitive huts, and burning in a huge flame twenty or thirty feet high. This flame, mixed with the wonders of the sunset, broken here and there by feathery reeds, was a picture worth all the cold of the " shoot " to see.

They let the cane smoulder down at night.

It takes about three months to boil a good harvest. This had been a very good harvest, and while we sat round our big camp fire, seventeen villagers collected and squatted listening to our gramophone.

Suddenly we heard a strange cry. Many human voices raised in a sort of long-drawn-out howl. It was the people calling on their gods at moonrise. It rose and fell upon that still, calm night. After the prayer on the Ganges banks at which the whole village of fifty or sixty people assembled, they went back into the village and held a semi-religious tom-tom, cymbal and drum dance which had a beginning but seemed to have no ending, for, alas ! it went on till the small hours. This finale was a sort of harvest festival apparently, only attended by men.

We were solemnly asked to go and see it, and, of course, we went. They brought out one of those lovely native beds (*charpoy*), for us to sit upon and were kindness and politeness itself. They always were. The native of India in real India, apparently loves the sahib or Rajah. He neither knows nor cares for the agitator ; he is an agriculturist, a lover of nature, illiterate and fond of listening to the Public Story Teller when he gets a chance. Frugal in his ideas, religious in his habits, and

quite contented, he appreciates the wise rule under which he lives, and a dose of quinine or castor oil from the white man he enjoys beyond words. They are to him priceless and wonderful gifts.

Our fire blazed away to the leeward of the tents all night and our wondrous log, that whole tree-root, was barely finished after making a fifth camp fire, although here it was assisted by a bed-load of dry sugar cane which made it blaze splendidly until it almost outshone the stars.

Our beds were new ones when we started and cost one rupee each. They are merely matting supported on four short legs, but they are some of the most comfortable beds in the world and the only decent beds in India. The British apology for beds in the bungalows of India are too dreadful. Every native has a *charpoy*. It does for sleeping on (sometimes several people huddle together). It does for carrying goods on; it can be sat upon by day, but not sat on as we sit. Legs do not dangle in India.

On the sixth day we landed at Anupshahar.

At 2 p.m. the sun suddenly burst forth in all its glory as if to mock us again, for we had to leave the river and motor seventy miles to Delhi to be sure of being in time for a state dinner at Viceregal Lodge next day.

It was a wonderful drive back. On the roadside were two pots side by side on which were written:

"Water for Hindu."

"Water for Mohammed."

Neither would touch the water jar of the other

religion. We met two interesting large weddings, and at one village there was the weekly market. Furniture was being removed, sugar cane and cotton carried; some of the weird old carts had a second storey, and both floors were crammed with people. We passed literally hundreds of slow old bullock wagons plodding along at their usual two miles an hour pace.

India is literally strung together by bullock wagons and kerosene oil tins.

CHAPTER VIII

A GREAT NATIVE STATE—GWALIOR

MY most interesting time in India, on the whole, was my visit to His Highness the Maharajah Scindia at Gwalior. It was altogether a delightful fortnight, for Gwalior is a Native State, and a Native State seemed in every way to satisfy one's idea of what old India was, and is, and ought to be. About eighty per cent. of the people are Hindus and worship their gods.

Of course, it was very charming to be in Delhi, Lahore or Agra, but all big towns the world over are much alike, and in the case of India the big towns are so largely made up of British officialism that one sees little of the native life.

A real Native State is different. It represents ancient ideas. Gwalior lies in Central India right in the middle of those vast plains, and yet the fort rises perpendicular from the Plains—like the rock of Gibraltar from the sea. It is a red sandstone mountain, with a perfectly flat table top, a mile and three-quarters long, and at the widest not more than a quarter of a mile across. At the summit was a famous fort in the Indian Mutiny. The fort was not British, but was stormed and

captured during those terrible days in 1858 by Sir Hugh Rose's force. The British built large blocks of barracks on the summit for their garrison. The fort, as well as the cantonment of Movar, about five miles off, was restored to the Maharajah Scindia, father of the present ruler, in 1886. This fort of Gwalior is a very ancient stronghold, and has a most interesting history; but there isn't time to tell you much about that, except that there is a military school at the top, housed in the former barracks, for Indian students who are natives of Gwalior State, and the State Army is maintained by the Maharajah. The wonderful and quaint old palace of his forefathers dates back from the fifteenth century, and is still there, but no longer inhabited. The Maharajah lives in a modern palace below.

It has been known for a motor to snort and puff with difficulty up that hill, although it is so perpendicular; but I was lucky enough to waddle up it on a royal elephant. Poor beast! it was wonderful how it kept its foothold, the road is so terribly steep, and when it got to the top, it raised its trunk in the air by way of salute, as much as to say, "That is done."

King George and Queen Mary also went up on an elephant, but the Princess of Wales (as she then was) felt so uncomfortable riding up the perpendicular ascent on an elephant's back, that she preferred to walk down, which, in itself, must have been an extremely risky proceeding. The view from the roadway is beautiful, but the gradient is high.

Extremely solemn on official occasions, my host, the Maharajah Scindia, has a quaint sense of humour as well as a keen sense of gratitude. He gave a dinner-party—in a beautiful garden near the Palace, where, quite a short while back, tigers roamed at will—to his former tutor and friend, Mr. W. G. Johnstone.

We were about forty at that party, nearly all men. Mr. Johnstone sat on the Maharajah's left. I sat upon his right.

When the dinner was over, the Maharajah made the most touching speech of gratitude in perfect English to the Scotch gentleman who had guided his education. He told an amusing story of how Mr. Johnstone had encouraged him to take an interest in engineering as a boy by bringing from England an engine and coach, and some two or three miles of rails to run round the Park, and absolutely refusing to allow the little boy to go for a joy-ride in the coach until he had learned to work the engine himself, and knew something of its mechanism.

This was the origin of Scindia's interest in engineering. To-day he has vast railway tracks all over his Principality, which is as big as Wales, and he explained how all these improvements had originated from his bringing up and training by "Master Johnstone Sahib."

His Highness paid the most cordial tribute to his English tutor:

"I owe him everything," he said; "we all do. He taught me never to think of myself, but always to remember the grave responsibilities thrust

upon me in ruling a people, never to forget my people and their welfare, always to keep their betterment before me; to work hard and to work to wise ends; in fact, I owe everything, my ideals, my best thoughts to that dear man. He never gave me a holiday, and yet I loved him, and love him still."

The guests at the table were his own ministers, heads of the army, etc., and it was a touching tribute in perfect English from a great Indian ruler to his Scotch friend.

The King-Emperor's health was drunk; then Mr. Johnstone was preparing to get up and speak in reply. A mysterious message came. His Highness turned to the guest in whose honour the dinner was given, and said:

"May I go, please, sir? A most urgent message has come."

"Certainly, of course."

Then he turned to me—repeating the request and naturally getting the same answer.

Up jumped His Highness and off he went, followed by several servants. We waited—the reply speech could not be delivered. Everyone wondered why he did not come back. After a quarter of an hour, two ladies of the party said they would go and look for him.

They found him. There he was, sitting on a table in the garden calmly smoking an English pipe.

"Is that eulogy of my virtues and vices over," he inquired.

"No."

"Oh! I came here to avoid it," he laughed. But he was brought back like a naughty child, and being well admonished by the tutor he loves so well, had to own up that the "urgent message" had been merely a ruse. He was doubly punished for his trick by Mr. Johnstone telling stories of how naughty he had been as a boy, and the awful games he played upon his former tutor.

Scindia has done marvels for his country and its three and a half million people in his twenty-six years' reign—for he began at the age of twelve—and withal he remains as larky as a boy and as mischievous as a kitten when *en intime*.

That sort of mischief seems to be inherited by his small son. His father had not learned a word of English until he was twelve, and this little person of four knew none, but I suppose he thought me something rather strange, for he was particularly fond of running up and giving me a small smack, laughing ingenuously in my face and running away again. The only English words he knew were "Ices" and "Chocolates," the two articles of fare he particularly enjoyed when he could escape from his *entourage* of military colonels, gorgeous attendants, nurses, governess and what-not who constantly surrounded him.

At the great Spring race meeting a small bundle was carried into the Royal Box by four attendants. The little bundle was laid on the sofa, and lo! this amazingly dressed miniature doll was the Heir Apparent, sound asleep.

His father wore ordinary European tussore clothes, but the small boy was in lovely silks with

wondrous jewels, anklets, bangles, earrings and nose-ring in true Indian style. When he awoke he opened those marvellous eyes, with the longest eye-lashes I have ever seen in my life, and simply stared at me. Then with one spring he jumped from his sofa and rushed at me to begin his friendly pats, and murmur " Ices " or " Chocolates."

But the funniest thing of all was to see him running away from all his attendants when he once got below in the paddock, and run he did, with the whole *entourage* following behind, much to the amusement of his father, who seemed to appreciate the joke as much as the young man himself.

Two years later, as the heir to the Gwalior State—on the arrival of the Prince of Wales—the boy was in the full ceremonial dress of a Mahratta noble, surmounted by the butterfly shaped turban or hat. The train drew up. He stood at attention. When trying to salaam to the British Prince, his hat rolled off and along the platform, much to the amusement of everyone present and the huge delight of the young gentleman aged six, and also the heir to the British throne.

It was at Gwalior the Prince of Wales had five days' halt to shoot tigers. He got two himself, the total bag being eight. But apparently the British heir prefers knocking a polo ball about to big game shooting and is never tired of the saddle. It was on the race-course that he had a fall from his pony and insisted on mounting again to finish the game in spite of the sun.

The tigers of Gwalior State are famous, and as

late as 1918 one calmly walked down the High Street and entered the Post Office, and another meandered even later into the Palace Grounds.

The Maharajah of Scindia is a most polished man, and has the most charming manners. He attends to all the affairs of his State himself. In fact he is quite one of the busiest men in India, and one of her greatest princes. He never seems to have an idle moment, and one constant stream of officials passes in and out of his office all day. Talk of an eight-hour day—eighteen would be more like when speaking of this great ruler, a man of vast wealth and, by choice, no leisure.

He has two wives, the *Senior* as she is called, has no children. According to Hindu rites, it took them a whole month to get married, the ceremonies were so tremendous in the early twentieth century.

Some years later his mother and his wife put their wise heads together to find him a second wife, now called the *Junior*. This wife has two children, the boy and a girl, and the whole family party live together in great unanimity. Both are cultured ladies. Both speak English. Both have an English lady doctor as their constant companion. Both take considerable interest in the affairs of the world and yet at the same time, they are both in *purdah*.

As a rule the Maharajah lunches every day with his two wives and his children in Indian fashion, but at night he dines with his Staff, his friends and his visitors, sometimes at the Guest House—there are two Guest Houses, one for Indian

visitors and one for Europeans—and sometimes in the Palace.

On one particular night there was a big banquet at the Palace. We all sat at little round tables and I suppose there were about one hundred people altogether.

The French cook served the meal, the menus were in French, the flowers had been arranged by an English lady, the glass and silver was all faultless, and the whole party might have been one in Europe except for the fact that Indian servants in *chupkans* (white gowns) and red royal waist-belts and *pugarees* (turbans) waited upon us.

In honour of this banquet, the two children were allowed to stay up. They had had their meal early and been made to lie down and told to go to sleep, which, of course, neither of them had done, and they were very wide awake when they came in to walk round and shake hands with the guests bidden to the dinner.

Then came the awful moment when they were to go to bed. The little girl, perhaps because she was older, perhaps because she was better behaved, made her little salaams and departed quietly. Not so my black-eyed, long eye-lashed wicked little heir apparent, aged four. He popped under sofas, he disappeared under tables to the immense danger of white napery and fine crystal; in fact he led everyone a dance until he was led off squealing and kicking to his bed.

Knowing I was much interested in the children, the Maharajah asked if I would like to see them go to bed. Gladly I accepted.

It was altogether an amusing performance. They were taken out of their gorgeous native clothing, their jewels were solemnly counted and handed over to an attendant, and having been disrobed of all their little silk shirts and under-garments and duly washed, they were put into other little silk shirts and under-garments to go to bed.

My friend, the black-eyed scamp took opportunities to give me his friendly pats or smacks at odd intervals, shewing how thoroughly boyish a little Indian boy can be, although the affairs of State a few years hence may settle him down as they have done his father.

Their beds were large hard mattresses on legs, almost like old English four-posters. All round the top and sides were mosquito nets. There was no attempt at sheets, and blankets, of course, were not needed in the heat, and as the little boy finally lay prone upon his bed, an ayah sat inside the curtains waving a fan over him.

He was very tired in spite of his pranks, and had hardly laid his dark little head upon the pillow before he was sound asleep.

The ceremony of that undressing, the folding up of his complete attire which, by the by, was changed every day according to the functions at which he was to participate, the removal of the jewellery which appertained to each suit, was really a very serious and important affair. There were five people to put that young couple to bed in the room next door to their mother, and I believe two ayahs remained all night beside the children in case they woke.

This royal suite was all comfortably furnished, and a strange mixture of East and West. It is very interesting to note how in all these Middle East and Far Eastern countries the native peoples are assimilating European habits.

Many of them prefer a chair to squatting on their heels, or the floor. Where the Mohammedan of Egypt, Palestine and Syria is wont to cross his legs and sit on his haunches, he often has for choice a high seat outside his little café and tries to practise sitting there with his legs dangling down. In India, where they don't cross their legs and squat, but have their knees straight up under their chin, they balance themselves in some wonderful fashion on their heels. Here again European chairs are creeping in, and any house of any pretentions has at least one chair in its possession.

All the thinking men of India I met say *purdah* in the higher classes will be swept out in twenty years. They see the advantage of having wives as chums, helpmates and friends, and they are bringing up their daughters with that idea—but it's the younger men who must learn first to treat women with proper respect, and not merely as slaves and chattels.

It is absolutely ridiculous to talk of giving Indian women the vote at present.

If British women were only "supposed" to be educated enough for the franchise in 1918, then India will not be ready for the vote for another three hundred years. The bulk of the women of India have no education whatever. Even the

highest sit on the floor and eat with their fingers. It is not their fault, poor things; they are the slaves of man and custom. And yet one meets well-educated ladies among the Rajahs' wives, and wonders how they can possibly know so much when they have seen so little. There is one Indian woman ruler, and a great ruler too—the Begum of Bhopal—but smallpox raged in her State, and I did not meet her.

A few hundred women have risen above custom, and gone specially into medicine or Law, where they matriculate at seventeen, but when one speaks of Indian women one does not speak of a few hundred, or any way, one should not; one speaks of that great, vast hundred million of uneducated Indian women. It will take centuries for the masses to get out of *purdah*, to be educated, and become what the women of the West have become, viz., great factors in national life.

It was a terrible shock to see the Royal and wonderfully up-to-date motor arrive at the race-course for the great spring meeting. The blinds were drawn, and as there was a little way between the entrance to the private apartments and the car, Indian servants unrolled large sheets, and ran them along the footpath on either side, so that the Royal ladies might pass through from their motor to the private door, free from the gaze of man.

This pen-woman had a delightful little tea-party with them in their box, where they were receiving many lady guests, but never a male being entered this private precinct. The ladies enjoyed the

sport, which they viewed from behind muslin curtains, just as the wife of the Sultan of Egypt—now called King—views the opera in Cairo from behind net windows which guard the Royal Box.

One of the charms of visiting in these Royal Palaces is the freedom. One just does what one likes—no sooner is a wish expressed than someone slides off to see that it is met.

Luncheon and dinner are at fixed hours, generally one o'clock and eight o'clock, but breakfast and tea one takes where one likes and when one likes.

Everything is comfortable, but there is little gorgeousness in the ordinary daily life; that is reserved for great Durbars. One seldom sees strange servants in one's rooms, because everyone in India travels with his own bearer, and that bearer fetches tea, or fruit, or hot water, brushes clothes, finds the washer-man, goes to buy stamps or send parcels, in fact, is one's own particular factotum, so no visitor is ever dependent on the servants of a host.

Another amusing incident that happened at Gwalior was the arrival of the Sultan of Muscat.

All blame be to me, I had never heard of Muscat before except in connection with grapes, but I was quickly informed that it was an important spot at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, with a great rocky eminence behind the town where we had an English resident, who incidentally was a charming young man, and the son of the famous Sirdar, Sir Reginald Wingate; and that the Sultan of Muscat had come away to India for a little cool weather, or, let us call it, cooler than his

own perpetual heat, and was paying various visits to various Indian princes.

Unfortunately, the gentleman did not speak one word of any language but his own, though he could understand a little Hindustani. But he was such a cheerful soul, it mattered little, and he did his best to be polite in a few words. Each time we met, before a meal, upon the stairs, or on the veranda, he most solemnly salaamed, bowing low and gesticulating with both his hands.

"How . . . do . . . you . . . do?" Another salaam in which he almost prostrated himself before me when he repeated:

"How . . . do . . . you . . . do," and yet a third time:

"How . . . do . . . you . . . do?"

This was a mixture of the habits of his country and the habits of mine, the three salutes being important as homage from his race; the four English words he had learned as a compliment to me.

He was a magnificent-looking man, tall, and brown and big, beautifully dressed, and with a most dignified bearing with the daggers of his ancestors tucked in his belt.

One day he came upon me when I was painting. This seemed to interest him enormously. Perhaps he had never seen anybody painting before; anyway, he stood perfectly silent for half an hour behind me, smiling occasionally, but otherwise motionless.

Apparently, the picture, or the making of it, had struck him as particularly strange, for he

went off to Mr. Wingate to find out what the thing I was doing was called, and having rehearsed the word "P . . . ic . . . ture" until his tongue could pronounce the syllables, he used to come and stand before me and repeat the word:

"P . . . ic . . . ture," and with gesticulations announce the fact that he wished me to show him some. Accordingly they had to be produced, when he most carefully stood them all up on chairs, looked at them one by one, put them round the room on tables, and looked at them again, and I can honestly say that I never had a more ardent admirer in the picture line than His Highness the Sultan of Muscat. For this process was repeated daily.

On one occasion he was to go to tea at the British Residency, and Mr. Jardine, being particularly anxious to do everything that was correct, announced that His Highness would, of course, sit upon the sofa as the guest of honour, with the tea table placed before him, and we must all sit about on different chairs.

But to make plans for a Royal Highness is one thing, to carry them out another.

The Muscat car was duly met at the door by all the British Government servants in their best attire, and the gentleman was bid enter the drawing-room ahead of the host. Nothing of the kind. The double doors were opened with due pomp, but instead of His Highness the Sultan of Muscat being the first to enter, he pushed Mr. Jardine through in front of him. Plan No. 1 had failed.

Most smilingly His Highness refused to sit

upon the sofa. Plan No. 2 went wrong, and having partaken of tea and cake, he evidently had come to the conclusion that the greatest courtesy would be to dispense them himself in future, so up he jumped, seized the silver teapot in one hand and the cake plate in the other, rushed across to me and proceeded to pour the tea into my half-empty cup.

It was no good Mr. Jardine trying to relieve him of his burden, or Mr. Wingate or his native followers helping him. He had made up his mind to pour out tea for the three ladies present, and pour out that tea he did, merely going back to seize the milk jug in one hand and the sugar basin in the other, so as to complete this all important ceremony. And, with all, he never lost his dignity of bearing, and remained every inch the Prince.

I wanted to take his photograph, which he was given to understand through his interpreters, and he was much pleased thereat, but he absolutely refused to be photographed alone, saying politely "No, this is the house of the British Raj, and his representative, Mr. Jardine, must stand beside me."

That struck me strangely, for it showed that this man who really knew nothing of the ways of the Western world, had some innate gift of courtesy. In fact, if one wants to learn what beautiful manners really are, and alas! they are rapidly disappearing from civilization, one must go back to the native peoples to find innate courtesy, curious charm and magnificent dignity and gait of carriage.

A Great Native State—Gwalior

Nothing could be more wonderful than the view towards Gwalior Fort at sundown from that British Residency, where I also spent a few days with our Resident, Mr. Jardine.

The whole of India seems to smoke at sundown. No sooner has the sun begun to set—and it is a very quick process, for twilight is unknown in the East—than the whole of the population of India cooks enough food for twenty-four hours.

Nearly four hundred millions of people have to be fed, and the housewives bring out their little pots with their little charcoal contents, and kindle their little fires before their little huts and homes, and thereon cook their rice or their chapatis (bread), because the one great meal of the day is eaten by the entire population after the sun is down. Few of us remember that three out of every four of the King's subjects are Asiatics.

The effect round the Gwalior Fort was wonderful. The blue haze from the smoke of these thousands of fires gave the effect of water or sea below, and it really looked as though that red sandstone monster, with its Buddhist carvings —or, more properly speaking Jain, an offshoot of the Buddhist religion—and Hindu temples, was standing out of a lake or the sea, tinted with reds and purples and gorgeous yellows until the light gradually failed and the great fortress passed from view.

Evening after evening I used to sit enthralled, watching that great rock gradually disappear. Evening after evening the shades of sundown seemed different, something new appeared or

something disappeared, and weird suggestiveness took its place as the heat and mist rose from the earth, and the queer noises and wonderful hot perfumes of the tropics became almost overpowering.

One of the great products of Gwalior is carpet weaving; they are some of the most beautiful in the world. They are Eastern. They are soft to walk upon. They are made of the most wonderfully subdued colours in the most wonderful velvety pile, and they sell for large sums.

These carpets are made in the prison, and unless a man has a sentence of over two years, it is not worth while teaching him carpet weaving. But if the sentence is longer than that he becomes an expert, and hence the wonderful productions of that Gwalior prison.

Six men sit at a loom, and so complicated and wonderful is the work, that those six men only accomplish two inches in a whole day. The pattern maker squats between two such looms, and has in his hand an intricate-looking map, all apportioned out into little squares and colours, from which he reads and calls forth with a curious sing-song intonation the number of stitches, such as:

three red,
four grey to left
two yellow to right
one brown middle, etc.

The result being that one loom on each side of him is making a carpet, thus they are always done in duplicate.

All this sounds a lengthy process, and so it is,

but at the same time, when a plain bit of pattern is reached, the shuttles fly dexterously, and it is only at the more complicated twists and turns that the carpet weaver is held up and the work goes slowly.

All the predecessors of Scindia have been buried in a great Hindu temple, a very wonderful place, and there, every morning at sunrise, little plates of food are placed before the shrines to his father, grandfather, etc., by the priests so that their spirits may be fed.

It all seemed very weird and strange to go back from the twentieth century to the continuance of the customs of the Middle Ages—to dine with this up-to-date Indian Prince, and then see the daily rites at the shrines of his ancestors. But all that makes India so interesting, so wonderful.

At Gwalior, among enormous carved Hindu statues, or more properly speaking, Jain saints called Tirthankars, enormous Buddhas are carved in the solid red sandstone on the face of the rocky fortress. The Buddhist and Jain religions are very similar and yet separate. If I remember rightly, the Jains believe man's soul is *eternal;* other faiths believe it is *immortal.* The Jain believes his soul passes on from generation to generation.

Two thousand five hundred years ago a Prince in North-East India " saw the light," and became the Buddha. He was just an ordinary man, although a " Prince." The night his son was born, instead of helping in the rejoicings, he left the Palace, and for six years became a wanderer after Truth. Buddhists all revere the name of

his wife for helping him in his life. Buddhism is a religion of each man's own soul. Each individual alone makes or mars his own life. That is their tenet, and how true.

At Abu Simbul, on the border of the Sudan, instead of Buddhas and Jains, huge Pharaohs are also carved in the solid red-yellow sandstone. Similar and yet dissimilar are the figures. Both go back hundreds of years, and both are religious omens, erected by man's hand to their gods.

India is full of endless religions, in constant conflict with one another. They have an immense influence on the masses, who are religious, noisily religious, riddled with superstition and conservative to the bone. A good thing, too; there may be too much religion and too many feasts and fêtes in India; there are rapidly becoming too few in Europe, where religion seems to have had the bottom of its faith knocked out.

The Spring of 1920 was very important for the vast Hindu population, and one must remember that the Hindus are by far the greatest number in India.

Unluckily, I was taken ill in Agra when the sudden heat came in May. Having delayed my journey to Kashmir because the snow was late in lifting in the Himalayas, where I had already engaged a houseboat for the summer, I had dallied too long in the Plains, where the heat came particularly early and ferociously, so I got boxed up between the two. The heat in Agra arrived as if you had opened the door of a great blast furnace. Everyone was ill.

My last remembrance of Agra was the sight of an enormous and wonderful Hindu procession. Great big horses, almost life-size, were being carried through the streets. They were generally covered with shining silver paper; streamers were attached to banners, which streamers people held in their hands as they sang and danced and shouted round the poles.

It was strange to see these silver horses marched through the town as part of a religious ceremony, because a year before I had seen the great altars of the Virgins carried from the churches in Seville during Holy Week. They were taken during the night in solemn procession, accompanied by priests and acolytes, to the Cathedral to be blessed and carried back in the early hours by twenty or thirty men staggering beneath the weight of each altar, to repose in their own special church till the following "Semana Santa."

This Hindu business was particularly important, because all imminent marriages had to be completed at once, and consequently the tom-tom never ceased that spring. The stars had said that any Hindu marriage contracted during the two following years would bring disaster, and so marriages increased a hundred per cent.

All this was very interesting, certainly barbaric, and reminiscent of the Middle Ages. But unfortunately I took to my bed with rheumatic fever, and then those processions and those noises became absolutely excruciating. For days and days all through the hours of light, and all through the hours of darkness, those processions marched

about Agra. The people tom-tomed, they shouted, they shrieked, and what between the noises of these incessant Hindu gatherings, and the everlasting tap, tap, tap, of the coppersmith bird, coupled with that awful Indian cough, which every servant employs to attract one's attention, the noises seemed to throb into one's very brain.

It is not particularly delectable to be ill in India. It is specially undelectable to be consumed by high fever with the temperature itself almost intolerable. But, thanks to a good doctor, a kindly hostess, an excellent Eurasian nurse, and a most attentive bearer man, who, by the by, was the best lady's-maid I ever had, I lived through those trying times; but instead of going to the houseboat four or five days' journey away to the north, and enjoying a wonderful summer in Kashmir, I was bundled back south to Europe like a limp sack of potatoes, practically carried on board at Bombay to take a tremendous cure at Aix-les-Bains.

Life is made up of disappointments, sometimes little and sometimes big. Life, indeed, is like a Chinese puzzle, and one is always trying to fit in the missing bits. As it proved impossible to go to Kashmir and home by Bagdad and Damascus, with that horrible spirit that refuses to be beaten more than necessary, I finally got back to Damascus from the west instead of the east, and almost reached Bagdad through Transjordania.

But we will jaunt there together further on.

Mohammedan Turkish Priest at Salonika.

[*To face p.* 146.

A Greek at Athens.

Turkish boatman, Tripoli, in Asia Minor.
From photos by the Author.

Jews loading a ship at Salonika.

CHAPTER IX

A LIGHTED MATCH—ATHENS—SALONIKA

WILL you take a jaunt with me from Venice, in and out of the coast line and the Greek islands, until we reach Syria and Palestine? There will be war in the Middle East, so come and have a look at it before the flame bursts forth again.

You will? Well, come along on this Italian boat, you and I. But do not imagine the Great War is over, although Peace was signed in Paris years ago, for war is not over. War in the Middle East had been just getting ready to begin, and as we travel on together, you will soon realize what led up to the conflagration of the Autumn of 1922.

It's all arranged, settled, planned carefully, and paid for—our trip—but, and this is a big BUT, it was only beginning (like the new war) in August, 1920, and we shall see and know much before our journey is over. I chose that trip because I knew war was coming. Everyone in the East knew war was inevitable, and that it was merely a question of where.

The Christmas before it had been solemnly

announced in the Press that the Allies really intended talking over the question of what was to be done with Turkey. Nearly three years later Turkey took the matter into her own hands. Do you wonder the Turks moved, as the Allies delayed? I do not.

There were strikes in Venice in August, 1920, and red flags were still waving along the quays over the shipbuilding yards which the workmen had seized, but found they could not work, so they had to ask their hated "capitalists" to come and help them, and admit they were quite incapable of obtaining orders, or credit, or apportioning work, or getting the thing to run at all by themselves.

No wires at that time, or letters, were possible between Trieste and Venice. D'Annuncio had all Trieste aflame. It used to be said that Napoleon's idea of diversion was to begin a new war, and really the diversion of the world to-day seems to be to begin new wars, and talk about universal peace. The Triestino Lloyd Office in Venice had no idea if their boat from Trieste would arrive in the Lagoon or not. As the train still went between the two cities in spite of D'Annuncio, however, a "live-man-wire" was despatched by the circuitous train route to see what could be arranged in Trieste about the boat for which several passengers were already waiting in Venice.

I sat packed, gazed from my hotel window across the Grand Canal; dined and chatted, gazed again, and then—yes. There she was, the steamer had come—late—but still, she had arrived to bear me away.

Our delightful British Consul, Francis Patron, took me on board in his gondola, and everything would have felt very romantic but for the darkness of the night, and the awful squabbling of the boatmen in another gondola over the luggage, and the dread that suit-cases and cabin-boxes might disappear at any moment. I thanked Heaven devoutly I was not alone with those Italian ruffians.

Two years later things were even worse, and that self-same boat could not work according to its itinerary at all.

We will not bother much with the Adriatic or the Dalmatian Coast, except to mention that the Italians had just been told to clear out of Valona, nestling below the Albanian Hills, and had done so, by going a little further along the coast and setting an Italian gunboat outside Valona itself.

We will not stop long at Corfu, interesting as the old island is, and rich at the moment, for large sums were made out of the olives in 1919.

But we must just pause to congratulate the ex-Kaiser on the superb position he chose for his palace, now a British hospital, about which there was so much talk in war days of supplies of hidden oil for " U " boats. I was assured the stories were untrue.

It was an extraordinary revelation to see the British goods stacked in rows. I did not know there were so many sheetings and grey shirtings in the world, and made a sort of bowing acquaintance with " dry goods " generally, for among the ship's passengers were a number of travellers from

Manchester, and they seemed to be doing a thriving trade. Our passengers were nearly all men; for a whole month they were practically all commercial travellers, and they were of every possible nationality—holding every possible kind of views about everything.

At a place like Patras the goods were not only stored in the shops from the floor to the ceiling, but they were stacked out in the streets and along the open quays. At shops like druggists, there were nothing but British drugs and soaps—in fact, it seemed as if a little bit of the commerce of the old country had descended on to Greece. Every town we touched at in Greece—and in many other places too—British goods were paramount.

It was interesting, of course, to go through the Corinth Canal. There, on the right in the hills, stood ancient Corinth. Almost nothing remains. Below, a small, dull, little modern Corinth has sprung up, but one would rather remember the old traditions of childhood than look at that modern township.

The three-mile Corinth Canal is so narrow there was only just room for our five-thousand-ton ship to squeeze through, and one could not but admire the dexterity of everyone, both in the ship and on the shore, who helped in the process. No one could be bored on such a trip round the Greek mainland and its islands; the wonderful evenings, the beautiful colourings, the deep, clear darkness of the sea. But we must not stop to moralize, you and I, we must just hurry on to Athens, where excitement was in the air because of the elections.

A Lighted Match—Athens—Salonika

As you and I are jaunting we will make our first real halt at Athens.

How little people know of the chances of the ballot. I sailed from Athens assured that Venezelos was going back into office, that there was no chance of anything else, that he was all powerful, and had got the British Government and others to concede vast territories to Greece.

Two days after I left, Mr. Venezelos was out of office, and King Constantine was back at the top of events. "Tino" flattered his army and, backed unfortunately by Great Britain, he moved it for a time victoriously. Then the Nationalist Turks, led by Kemal (backed by the French—with whom they had made a pact in Syria), moved more victoriously, and—well—what next?

The downfall of Venezelos began the upgrade of "Tino," and the march of that Greek Army to the gates of Constantinople two years later.

In Athens—alas and alack—the national dress had almost disappeared. One beautiful man in beautiful black, embroidered on fine cream cloth, looked a perfect picture near the Acropolis.

Of course Athens is a beautiful town. It is both ancient and modern, and from whichever point of view one looks at it, it is still beautiful. But my visit was all too short to see everything, and the most lasting memory is the effect of the moon at night from my hotel balcony.

First let it be said the hotel was rather a shock; it was supposed to be the best in Athens. I had wired for a room. The room was ready, but the hotel was being painted, and when I returned from

a very long expedition and asked the hall porter where the dining-room was, he looked at me in surprise. It was then eight o'clock. I was tired and I was hungry.

"The *salle à manger*," he replied, "is there, but it is shut."

"Shut," I exclaimed.

"Certainly, Madame. We give no meals in the summer months, except early coffee."

"Where am I to have any food?" I asked.

"There are restaurants everywhere," he replied; "most of them out of doors. Madame can dine at any of them."

But "Madame" did not feel at all inclined to sally forth alone in the dusk of the evening into unknown Athens to feed by herself in a public restaurant.

"Can't you give me anything?" I asked.

"No, Madame," he replied, "there is no dinner here."

"Could I have an omelette?" I persisted.

"If Madame will take coffee, perhaps I could persuade the cook to make an omelette."

And so in the greatest hotel of Athens, the cook kindly condescended to make an omelette to the accompaniment of coffee, both of which proved delicious on the balcony of my bedroom, with that glorious view below.

It was truly a glorious view, for gradually the lights twinkled in the town; the blue-green sky was slowly transforming to yellow and pink, and the Acropolis standing on its hill, became purple and blue in the gathering night, the pillars of the

temple standing out clear and distinct as the moon rose.

It was a wonderful picture, the sort of thing one remembers for ever, and as the darkness o'ercame the sky, the brilliant lights became more brilliant below. But it is a strange thing how very lonely one can feel in a big town. No one for whom I had introductions was there. Every hotel was shut up, the place was hot and deserted, and one feels insufferably lonely under such circumstances, the loneliness that is quite unknown in less frequented haunts.

In the face of the re-entry of the Turk into Europe it is amusing to remember that at Athens, just outside the town, is a large and interesting Turkish cemetery. The slabs are tall black marble, like flattened pillows very ornately picked out in gold.

It was in a terribly neglected condition but had evidently been a good Turkish cemetery in its days, and who knows that it may not be so again before long. As a contrast to the dead, a most beautiful new stadium has been put up for the living. It is built of marble and it holds seventy thousand people. It was a gift from an Athenian, who made a fortune abroad, to his town.

Seventy thousand people means an enormous place, nearly twice as big as the Seville bull ring, which seats thirty-eight thousand. Both are naturally open to the heavens above, because no roof could span such floor space. The London Stadium will hold 135,000.

In Athens all the Greeks seemed charming but it was quite extraordinary to find how much they

were disliked as a nation; in fact, in and out of the ports, their domination was as much an irritant as the French in Cilicia.

One gathers a great deal of information on a passenger boat that is going in and out of ports, because merchants, bankers, even camel men and donkey boys come on board, and one can hear the individual opinion of the individual person who lives in that particular district.

Hearsay if you like, but still people do know and understand the rights and wrongs under which they live.

And why did I hear and see so much?

Simply because I paint and scribble. That soon flies round and everyone and every race wishes to pour its stream of woes into sympathetic ears.

But to return to Athens itself.

The first impression of the Acropolis was its smallness. It seemed such a tiny place after the great Greek Temples of Sicily, so infinitesimal after the colossal wonders of Baalbec. It seemed small after the temples which are to be found all the way up the Nile almost to Khartoum, and yet the ruins at Athens are the most perfect style in the world, absolute gems of architecture, the very models of Greek work in the capital of Greece itself.

We modern Europeans think we can build. Ye Gods, one has only got to compare a modern English church with the work of the ancients to collapse in dismay.

Why, the Greeks, the Egyptians, and heaps more show how little we have progressed since the

ancient days, in spite of cranes, and machinery and architectural implements, and education in the art of building.

The Acropolis was built about 450–60 B.C., but a large part of it was ruined by the Venetian Bombardment in 1687.

It is a terrible risk to write from memory, because memory is a fickle jade.

Had I intended to write a book on this lovely tour, I should have taken elaborate and lengthy notes, as usual, but I never intended to do anything of the kind. I only contemplated learning to paint when I first started forth six weeks after the Armistice. But a new war came, so I'm scribbling some recollections.

Salonika was a sorry sight. Once a prosperous seaport town, where nominally the Turks reigned, but more or less under British guidance, it had just been handed over to the Greeks (August, 1920). There was hardly a ship in the harbour, trade was dead, enterprise had gone, everything seemed at a standstill. The Greeks seemed very unpopular, and the town was in a state of considerable discontent.

What our men must have suffered in the heat and dust round Salonika. There stood the twenty-three minarets, charming to look upon, with a vast portion of the town burned down, luckily only the slum part, and behind on the hills were still the red roofs of the little huts that were put up for our soldiers. The sun burns down in all its fury on Salonika, and it must have indeed been a dreary spot for those thousands of British men.

Little graveyards tell their tale, and the whole town is reminiscent of sad memories. The graves sprinkle the sunlit lands.

The canteens and Y.M.C.A. huts were still standing. They were empty then, but the British tongue had left its imprint, and beggars, and boys and fruit sellers of every nationality had picked up a few words of English.

Nothing could have been more interesting than my fellow passengers, especially the third class. Once, for a couple of days, we took several hundred Turks on board. They looked extraordinarily poor as they came up the gangway; they were mostly carrying babies, or enormous loaves of bread, and one almost wondered how they could possibly afford to pay their third-class ticket.

Now, it so happened that on landing anywhere, certain forms had to be gone through, amongst them a declaration of possessions in money, and it was quite a common thing for these immigrants, or whatever they called themselves, to have a hundred pounds, and sometimes as much as three hundred pounds in their possession.

They generally came on board looking thoroughly bedraggled, but before they landed anywhere where they expected to meet their friends, the most wonderful metamorphosis took place, and they came out in silks and satins. Yes, verily, in silks and satins; silver chains and even golden lockets, and they looked thoroughly well to do and resplendent.

At Salonika a curious medley of people dressed in all sorts of weird clothing came on board. They

had chickens and flower pots, musical instruments and cooking utensils. On the top of a perfectly enormous tub stood a goat, bedding and chairs, and baskets and extraordinary other strange things had they, so I could not help asking the Captain whatever sort of people they were.

"Greeks," he replied. "Those Greeks were in the Dardanelles under the Turks, and you Britishers, wishing to be very kind to them, brought them away from the Dardanelles so that they might be under their own Greeks in Salonika."

"How interesting," I exclaimed.

"They hated their own Greeks, and begged to be taken back again. The British refused; they asked again; the same answer, they had been brought back to their own people for their own good: but with their own Greek people they refused to remain. So they have collected enough money to pay their own passages, and I am going to take those two hundred Greek people back to Gallipoli, at their own expense, because they prefer to live under the Turks again."

Now what on earth is the good of trying to settle the affairs of the Middle East under such conditions?

Salonika is celebrated for one particular thing. Jews load the ships. Jews as a rule perform no manual labour; but at Salonika they do, and what is still more strange, many of them talk Spanish, imported there by their immigrant forbears four hundred years ago, and not forgotten. We were delayed because it was a Jewish feast, and for a whole day these men could not handle the cargo. So we waited.

Mainly East

Eighty millions of people have changed their nationality in Europe since the Peace Treaty. That is a pretty staggering announcement, and it shows that eighty millions of people are entirely unaccustomed to their new nationality, that they have not settled down, that they hardly know who they belong to, and that it will take generations before Europe alone re-arranges itself.

I am not going to write politics because politics change every five minutes, for it must be remembered that, although the Greeks had gone into Smyrna in September, 1920, the Greeks were pushed out of Smyrna by the Turks in September, 1922, and that now the Turks are back in Europe it would hardly be human on their part not to wish to seize Constantinople from the Allies, to reconquer Thrace, which lies along the European side of the Dardanelles, and to make their bid again for the Balkans.

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A Corner in the Middle East.

[*To face p.* 158.

Dardanelles Boats.

A Priest.

Greek Refugees.

Photos by the Author

CHAPTER X

THE DARDANELLES

IT is all very well to talk about the Dardanelles being left as an open waterway, but how is it going to be managed? I never was more surprised in my life than on entering the Dardanelles. I certainly did not realize that the piece of water was about three quarters of a mile across, so that from a ship in the middle one could almost throw a cricket ball on to land on one side or the other; that the passage is never more than three miles and a half at the widest part, and it is only thirty or thirty-five miles long. High hills stand erect on either side, well defended by Turkish forts, demolished in theory, but? According to my companion on that ship those Turkish forts never were properly demolished, and it would be very easy to put them back into working order again; but of course my companions may have been wrong, though one and all seemed pretty sure of their premisses, and asserted that if it ever came to war again it would not take long to put them back into a state of fortification, and that big guns could fire away from either side on to the ships below in no time.

There seemed to be hundreds of these forts above

the azure blue water and in the hills dotted thickly were quaint, rocky towns. While the League of Nations was sitting in Geneva, Session III., September, 1922, safeguarding Peace, the Greeks and Turks were in bloody conflict. Mesopotamia was at war, Palestine and Syria were not much better. Upper Silesia and Afghanistan could hardly be termed peaceful, and Ireland was in the throes of Civil War.

The League of Nations promised well; it seems to be slipping into a sort of waste paper basket for shelving difficult problems. Will this new war be its death knell, or will it be its resurrection?

As the Turks, solidly instituted, are on the Eastern side in Angora, and in Constantinople are only divided by the hills on the Western side from Thrace and Salonika, they are masters of the situation. One of the difficulties of these Western hills is the fact that a large population in Thrace is and always has been Turkish. Those are the Turks in Europe. And although Constantinople and a few miles round it belong to the Sultan by arrangement, with the Allies as his guard, the Sultan is a Turk, and when the strong power of Mustapha Kemal and his Nationalist Army chooses, they will probably annex Mr. Sultan and Mrs. Constantinople too.

When the war was over in 1919, the Turks, like the Germans, were thoroughly beaten. Great Britain and France were victorious, and had they then and there made proper agreements with Germany and Turkey, they could have enforced the carrying out of those agreements for the peace

and welfare of the world. They did nothing of the sort. Hence this prodigious muddle.

Great Britain's sons clamoured to be demobilized from the Army almost before the War was over—or supposed to be over, for subsequent events proved it was not finished in reality. They clamoured to get back into civilian life, and it was not properly explained to them that there was nothing to get back to. Everything was disorganized, every trade was upside down, no one knew what money they had, nor what the taxes were to be, nor what trades could be revived; so instead of keeping these men in the Army and teaching them trades properly, and letting them out as the jobs were ready to absorb them, we allowed these millions of men to discard their uniform before there were even civilian clothes to put upon their bodies, and walk about the streets unemployed to the tune of two millions which we taxpayers have had to pay. And there are a hundred thousand ex-officers on the verge of starvation.

Of course, it is silly to be wise after the event, but politicians never will, or can, understand foreign diplomacies, the Army, the Navy or the Air Force. "Party" and "Office" are far more important to the politician. Surely war should be waged by men educated in the three services, diplomacy should be run by those possessing diplomatic training and experience; and as for Downing Street sitting round a table and settling the affairs of the world—or worse still, Mr. Wilson, a college professor from America, coming over to dictate foreign policy—the whole thing has ended, as was

inevitable, in the most deplorable condition of affairs. The Irish stew is bad and Eastern hash is sickening.

One thing we do not realize in this country, and it is one of the most important points in the world's history to-day, that there are far more Mohammedans than Roman Catholics, that their religion means an immense amount to them, that the Sultan of Constantinople is their recognized Caliphat, that the entire Moslem-Islam world looks to him with mythical reverence. The more uneducated people are the more they enjoy the pleasures of Holy Wars, and if only the whole of our members of the two Houses of Parliament could travel about a bit and see these various places in their own countries, their simplicity, their religious fanaticism and their constant hungering for new sensations and new leaders, they would realize what a hopeless tangle Great Britain and France are making of the whole East and Middle East affairs.

As we are an enormous Moslem Power we must work in harmony with the Moslem people, and I am afraid we must realize that Adrianople is an outpost of the Turkish Empire and necessary for its security.

Truly the Dardanelles were an immense surprise. Please to picture again a narrow strip of water only thirty miles long; the Straits are only about three-quarters of a mile across at the Narrows. Consequently, any ships passing up the middle can be thoroughly well bombed from either side.

I had never heard the word Chanak till I got there. No doubt it had often been mentioned in

the old war days in spite of suppressed information, but somehow the name did not strike me. However, as the ship drew off the Eastern bank of the Dardanelles, everybody ran about whispering to everybody else that this was Chanak. A bit of flat sandy land bounded by scrub, on a small peninsula. The houses mostly one-storied and generally flat-roofed in Oriental fashion. A few minarets, just like hundreds of other small Oriental towns, and in a very exposed position. Such was Chanak, now famous, as the British remained when their French and Italian allies departed.

The Greeks we had taken on board at Salonika, who had so disliked their own Greek people, were all dressed up, looking very smart and ready to go on shore. But unfortunately, the sea happened to be particularly rough, so rough that many hours went by before the boats could come off from the shore. The light was waning and the Captain was getting pretty perturbed, because he refused to wait till daylight to land these people with their enormous amount of luggage, and the oarsmen tried to assure him it was dangerous to get babies, goats and bundles into the boats in such rough water in the dusk.

Oh, how they talked. And what is more, they all seemed to be talking different languages and nobody understanding the other, but at last, the whole party was packed like sardines in little boats, and the last we saw they were rising and falling over great waves as they sped back—that Greek contingent—to make their homes again with the Turks they so truly loved.

Now that was at Chanak, about which one heard so much in the war rumbles of the Autumn of 1922.

It lies in the neutral zone; it is about half-way up the Dardanelles on the Asiatic side. British Military Advisers consider it essential that Chanak should be held to secure the freedom of the Straits for unarmed vessels, that without Chanak peaceable merchantmen could not go safely about their affairs.

Chanak apparently is the most important point of defence between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

From the hours I gazed at it through field glasses, it certainly looked a small and not particularly inviting town. There were one or two fairly big buildings, but most of it was low and scattered. How strange it is that often these little places are of such vital importance that they command the key to big situations. Chanak is to-day far more important than Gallipoli on the European side. Unfortunately, of Gallipoli I saw but little. It was the dusk of dawn, or dusk of evening both times we passed, and the steamer did not stop there at all. But what I could see was the rows of graves, telling their own tale of what had happened in the past.

My Italian captain was quite unable to point out any of the well-known spots of the Great War. The names were not on his chart, and, as he laughingly said:

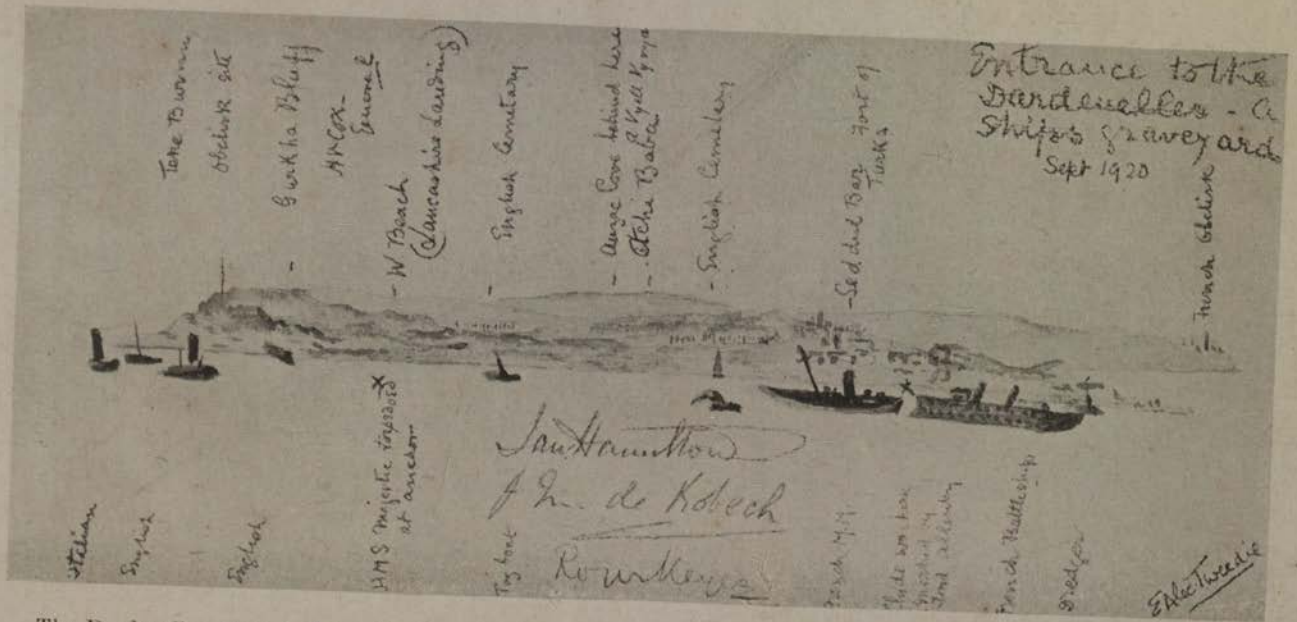
"You Englishmen made your English names yourself, and I do not know them."

So all I could do was to make a little sketch from the chart room of the hills as I saw them in passing

Two hundred Greeks came on board. They had been "rescued by the British from the Turks in the Dardanelles." They hated their own countrymen in Salonika, and paid their own fares to go back to the Turks, and were left at Gallipoli. From a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie.

Turkish women packing figs in Smyrna—which was Greek in 1920. Sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie finished in an earthquake *See page* 192.

[*To face p.* 164.



The Dardanelles, from a sketch by Mrs. Alec-Tweedie, now in THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM, signed by Gen. Ian Hamilton, Admiral de Robeck and Admiral Roger Keyes

up the Narrows on our left, with the two big English cemeteries, and the French obelisk already up at the Constantinople end, while the place of the English one was still under discussion. I sketched what remained of the nine boats that are above water, to say nothing of the numberless others invisible below.

To me the Dardanelles seemed a veritable ships' graveyard, a terrible page of mismanaged history.

That sketch remained an enigma for several months until one day, after a luncheon party in Cairo, it was kindly signed by:

Field-Marshal Lord Allenby and
General Sir Herbert Cox;

both of whom put in the names of the places outlined on the little page.

Then it came to London and other names and verifications were made and signed by:

General Sir Ian Hamilton,
Admiral de Robeck and
Admiral Sir Roger Keyes;

so now it has become quite a historical little sketch, and, as such, I was asked for a copy for the British Imperial War Museum, where it now reposes.

Oh dear! oh dear! vacillation is damnation!

Take a child. Tell it not to do something, and then let it do it. What is the result? The child ceases to trust or respect you. The child's character becomes deceptive, and your character loses self-respect.

It is exactly the same with nations and governments. We fought to get the Turk out of Europe.

We won; but we only won at a terrible price. We shut our eyes and closed our ears to warnings, and we let the Turk back into Europe, The child over again.

Is the Turk to remain in Europe or not ?

Decide that question, and then see it through. No more vacillation. We won the War, and lost the Peace.

The situation is grave and serious, and likely to remain so for a century. The Balkans and the Armenians are always with us—religions again—but one point is paramount, are the Turks to be kept in Asia Minor or to be re-installed in Europe ?

That brilliant wit and a dear friend, W. S. Gilbert, would have made a splendid play on the present situation, which is really a comedy, were it not one of the most terrible tragedies that have ever disturbed the world. Meantime the situation is quaint. The French encourage the Turks, Great Britain has supported the Greeks, and yet Great Britain and France are supposed to be Allies.

And half the trouble could have been avoided but for pernicious propaganda. The peoples of India, for instance, believe it was not the Turks so much as their Mohammedan religion that we were fighting. Forsooth, we are the most tolerant people in the world as regards religion, for every faith comes under our great and wonderful Empire.

But why did the politicians at home not listen to the rumblings in the East that followed the Great War; why did they close their ears to the ominous sounds they were told of by everyone who travelled

in those regions, and complacently go on paying out doles at home to quell more rumblings, which may burst upon them with as much surprise as the great Holy War that may not be far distant.

On September 23rd, 1922, one read headlines in the London Press :

" Soviets claim Black Sea."

" Guards leave Aldershot for Middle East."

" Three British Regiments are in Chanak : Loyals, Gordons and Sussex."

" The Italian and French Troops have been withdrawn from Neutral Zone."

" Bluejackets dig Trenches."

And again :

" The Greeks are demanding demobilization."

" Lord Curzon and M. Poincaré are talking in Paris."

" Mr. Lloyd George is talking with Labour in London."

" Lord Robert Cecil and Dr. Nansen are demanding Peace at League of Nations at Geneva."

" Kemal Pasha is in Smyrna demanding many things."

The United States announced she would take no part in anything.

Well ! well ! I only wish I could ask you to take a jaunt round these parts again in a couple of years and let us see what the outcome of it all has been. In the meantime, on that very 23rd of September, two hundred Turkish troops entered the neutral zone twenty-seven miles from Chanak, and after much parley retired. For how long ?

Things move apace.

Mainly East

On September 28th, 1922, the newspaper headings ran as follow:

Two hundred thousand Greek and Armenian refugees huddled together at Smyrna.

Tino abdicated.

Kemal says he knows no neutral zone.

More troops hurried out—Coldstream Guards and Rifle Brigade.

Lord Robert Cecil suggests International Air Force to maintain Peace.

On October 11th. Near East peace in sight.

Agreement signed at Mudania.

Ismet Pasha refers to Angora.

Allied terms accepted.

Crisis ended.

Please note the last cheery words ringing through the world on October 11th, 1922.

CRISIS ENDED.

Thinking people know the crisis is not ended, and will not be ended—that far more likely it is beginning.

In 1914 the Turks were so afraid of Germany that they threw themselves into her arms. They also thought Germany the winning side.

Suppose their fear of Russia, or co-operation with Soviet Russia, now throws Turks and Russians together? More war in the East follows, and a new European war clamours on its heels.

Few people realize the enormous importance of the relations between Russia and Turkey. The Turks firmly believe that Soviet Russia was their chief supporter in their attempt to gain full independence, and yet, at the same time, strange as it

may seem, the Turks look upon Russia as rather an obstacle and rival to their uniting the whole Mussulman world. Soviet Russia and Germany are also very friendly, and that means that three vast populations, Germany, Russia and Turkey, are more or less banded together against the world.

People have been very slow at home in realizing the importance of the controversy in the Middle East. It was no good writing anything about it when I was there in 1920, although the seriousness of the situation was very evident to everyone, because at that time everything and everyone was in the melting pot, but as no firm hand took charge of the Middle East muddle, it muddled on until it muddled to such effect that the explosion came two years later.

It is really not much good writing about the Middle East question to-day because things change so rapidly. The Turks have reconquered Anatolia; history repeated itself with a flying Greek Army hotly pursued by Turkish cavalrymen; Smyrna, which had just been handed over to the Greeks in consequence of the diplomacy of M. Venezelos in September, 1920, was already reoccupied by the Turks two years later. Battledore and shuttlecock.

Many may wonder why the Dardanelles are so important, and why there is so much talk about the "Freedom of the Straits," but if they once saw this narrow belt of water they would at once realize its importance. It divides Europe from Asia.

This is the waterway, not only to Constantinople, but to the shores of the Sea of Marmora, the

Bosphorus, the Black Sea, the whole of Southern Russia, and many of the ports from Persia and Asia Minor on the eastern side of Europe.

If you will think back for one moment, you will remember that the Ottoman Empire commanded these Straits from 1914 to 1918, that we were, therefore, completely cut off from Russia and her great grain-growing districts, and that large food supplies of the world never reached the Western Allies. Poverty and misery overtook Russia, and finally the overthrow of the Czar ended in the terrible condition of Soviet Russia of to-day. The Dardanelles is the key.

The freedom of the Straits is the lock, and does not mean only the freedom of trade in peace time, but it literally means food. It is a great passage for food; neither is Russia likely to be restored to any form of success if the whole of her southern lands are cut off from civilization. Above all, it must be remembered that Russia is practically devoid of rail transport. There never were many railway lines in that vast land; those that were there have been destroyed, or fallen into decay, and Russia is, therefore, impotent as regards export of produce if she continues to be handicapped by want of railways and has the whole of her southern shores cut off from a waterway to the sea. The north freezes.

The United States announced at the end of September, 1922, that "she would take no part whatever in helping to keep the freedom of the Dardanelles." We cannot help wondering whether America expects the freedom of the Dardanelles

to be kept by Great Britain for her to have the use of it afterwards? The freedom of the Straits is of vital interest to everyone. Why, then, should Britain alone be expected to fight for it?

The French had already withdrawn their troops from the Asia Minor side at Chanak; the Italians took no interest in the matter when the Americans announced they would do nothing. Therefore the Straits must either be kept open for the use of the world by Great Britain alone, or they will be closed to the use of the world by Kemal Pasha and his Ottoman Empire.

Our whole Eastern policy hung in the balance in October of 1922, just as the whole western world's peace hung on a thread in August, 1914.

Parliament then went to war with the nation behind them.

A few ministers were talking in October, 1922; war seemed imminent, and a war that might become a Holy War; but Parliament was not even sitting, and the nation had never been consulted at all.

We are protecting the Turkish Caliphat in Constantinople against a Turkish general, and on September 21st, General Sir Charles Townshend declared that if the Allies remained in Constantinople there would be a Holy War.

Let me introduce you, here and now, to the present victorious Turkish Army of Kemal Pasha. They certainly were the most extraordinary-looking lot of ruffians two years before. They not only had never been shaved for months, but, judging by their appearance, they had never been washed either. There was not one of them in a proper

suit of clothes. They seemed to have picked up any old thing, off any old rubbish heap, and displayed it upon their person. Some of them were very young, but a good many of them were old and sinister. They were not all Turks, although they had been fighting on the Turkish side and were prisoners.

They had been poured into Constantinople in such numbers, for there were probably one hundred thousand of them at the time, that they had to be housed anywhere, to get roofs over their heads. We really could not see the mosques for the mass of humanity that tiled the floors. They made a sort of mosaic pattern, over which one trod.

Some were squatting round little charcoal fires, cooking; some were trying to wash rags in tiny pots, and while these extraordinary performances were in progress the Muezzin called the faithful to prayer.

It was a curious moment. One noticed right at the back of the mosque an improvised screen had been drawn across. That little bit behind it was the sacred altar, facing towards Mecca. The really devout men dropped their slippers, washed their hands, and disappeared behind the screen to say their prayers in answer to the priest's call.

Only a small percentage of them did so, however, for the bulk could never have got behind that tiny space, however much they had tried to do so.

The mosque of Suleiman was simply bursting with prisoners, and among them were a large number of Serbs, one of whom stepped forward and addressed us in English.

He was a very nice-looking youth and at one

time of his life had been in service with an English family of whom he spoke with both love and respect. He had not the slightest idea of where he was going to or what was going to become of him, and announced he was " waiting orders."

Those were the men who victoriously marched back to Europe exactly twenty-four months later. Supposing you and I lift the veil again in 1924, what will those two intervening years have brought about ?

It seems rather strange to think of Kemal Pasha, a man who was practically unknown two years before, being at the head of well drilled, well supplied legions of troops, seventy thousand of whom were able to deal a death blow to the Greek army in Asia Minor. An army without discipline is merely uncontrolled rabble, just as Society without discipline is uncontrolled mob. All honour to Kemal for the wonderful work he did with those thousands of men in ill condition in the mosques. Did German officers help him ?

Undoubtedly the Turks had learned much in the Great War, and Kemal attacked the Greeks just as Hindenburg and Ludendorff attacked the French in March, 1918. He has become a big man. The Turk in Europe has again been felt. He is a person to be reckoned with. It is an open secret we could have bought the Turk as our ally a few short years back. Bought him for far less than we have spent in fighting him.

Only about three centuries ago the Turks, we must remember, had overrun a great part of Europe, especially what is now Hungary. How times

change in a few hundred years. Mexico, Florida, Central and South America were then under the Spanish or the Portuguese rule. There have been treaties ever since those days, but it seems as if these treaties will never end or mend anything.

Constantinople is perfectly wonderful from the sea, but equally disappointing on the land.

Let us envisage it again in Turkish hands.

From the first the wrangles of the Allies since the Great War have slowly and surely destroyed the prestige of one and all of them. The foreigner was respected and revered in Constantinople. To-day he is laughed at.

Once the Nationalist Turk resumes power out goes the present Sultan, and his successor will be one over whom far more constitutional control will be exercised. His religious position will remain unaltered, and his political status will be null and void.

After the Nationalists, the first Powers to assert themselves will be the Bolsheviks and the Germans. It will be a close race between them. Knowing nothing about it, I should like to prophesy the Germans will win.

One hears constantly of capitulations. Roughly this means every European nationality has the right to be tried by the consular court, and therefore can only be imprisoned under consular supervision and not in the common gaol, and has exemption from the payment of certain important taxes.

The Turk will have none of this. Therefore, no Christian or foreigner will have much chance

of success in litigation, and escape from prison will be expensive.

I thought Pera, the European quarter on the Asiatic side, horrible. Stamboul, the ancient town on the European side, is delightful, at least so far as its mosques are concerned; but every mosque, excepting Santa Sofia, was crammed with Turkish prisoners from Egypt, the Sudan, Arabia, Greece, from everywhere, in fact, all of whom were eating, sleeping, cooking, washing, etc., within the sacred precincts of their Mohammedan temples.

Constantinople at that time was in the hands of the Allies; in fact, it was being ruled by four nations, the English, French, Italians and Greeks. Four soldiers stood on every little street island, or before every bridge, endeavouring to control the traffic, which was utterly uncontrollable in four languages; and while people were being run over, each soldier swore at the other one because he had not understood what was being said, or because he had thought the victim did not belong to his particular nationality.

One of the most interesting things in Constantinople is its noise. There is a particularly unharmonious, strident and incessant cry, or shall we call it shriek, about Constantinople.

It is not musical; it is not low-toned; it is not sympathetic. It is a mingled noise which ends on a high and strident key, but it is very characteristic of the town.

It is always said that the Galata Bridge, which joins Stamboul to the Golden Horn at Constanti-

nople is crossed by more different nationalities in one day than any other spot in the world.

The saying is probably true. It is, indeed, a veritable bag of counters, and every counter represents another race, religion, creed, type of dress or thought.

But New York does not run it very far short, for New York opens its mouth weekly to thousands of immigrants from every quarter of the globe, who talk just as many languages as they do in Constantinople. But in Constantinople they are more or less free, whereas in New York one and all are practically, from want of means, obliged at once to take up hard and often ill-paid labour.

The top of America lives by the work of the newly arrived immigrants, who become the "under" America the moment they step ashore. How these "unders" gradually ascend, and some finally become top, I have described somewhat fully in "America as I Saw It." All honour to the United States for the education it pumps into those people and, above all, the patriotism it demands.

The only mosque I could really enjoy in Constantinople was Santa Sofia. The name means "Holy Wisdom." It was once Christian, and one can still see the outline of the faint figure of Christ above the altar.

The peacefulness is what strikes one on entering. There is a sort of subdued tone of browny grey mellowed by yellow over the whole building, much the same sort of harmonious colouring that

one finds in the great mosque at Damascus. Its general effect is vastness and soft colouring.

There were not many worshippers, and those who were there, prostrated with their foreheads upon the ground, were mostly women. This always strikes one as curious in a Mohammedan mosque, as there are few which women are allowed to enter at all. One is Hebron, because Sarah is buried there; one is Santa Sofia and another is Damascus, but it is almost an invariable rule that no Mohammedan woman should enter a mosque.

Owing to earthquake or guns, a great crack has appeared on one side of the famous mosque of Santa Sofia, and this was so noticeable at the time of the war by architects who were in military service that a move was made to see what could be done, and a very famous architect was persuaded to go out from England to report upon the wall, because it was felt that a very small earthquake would bring the whole thing tumbling down.

Experiments were in process, and one particular glass experiment which had been going on for six months had proved nothing.

It is a holy place; it is one of the most holy places for the Mohammedan world. It certainly is very beautiful, its simplicity and size being its charm, and there are occasions at the big feasts when it is absolutely crammed with humanity and where some of the biggest Mohammedan religious services take place.

I had heard so much about the Bosphorus that I was as keen to see the Bosphorus as I was to see

Constantinople, and thanks to the kindness of Dr. Clemow, of the British Embassy, and Colonel Holmes, also of the Embassy, who lent his car, I had a delightful though somewhat drizzly view of the Bosphorus, and even a peep at the Black Sea.

Parts of it are very charming. Parts are wild, and again in places there are pretty villages with pretty villas, gardens and orchards where the Europeans from Constantinople spend their summer holidays.

But Constantinople itself cannot be congratulated on its hotels. For such a large and important town they are extraordinarily bad, and what is more, they are extraordinarily expensive, but of course one is inclined to forget that Constantinople is not one town but many towns, and they are all utterly different. For instance, the Turkish or Mohammedan part of the city is Stamboul. That is the only interesting or beautiful part.

As Pera is the fashionable quarter for embassies, political officers and Society generally.

The Golden Horn is business.

All three are perfectly clear and distinct in themselves and yet when spoken of are hyphened together in the one word, Constantinople, where nobody seemed to be busy; everybody seemed to be waiting for something; the true Oriental blood seemed to run in their veins, for verily in the East the saying "Time waits on no man" is untrue. Time waits on every man and everything. No one bustles.

There are only two dominant nations in the East, the British and the Turks. We must make friends with the latter, and it really seems advisable that

we should send a military man as ambassador to Kemal Pasha, who is now in a big position as head of the Turks, quite different from what it was in 1920, for then he was only small fry, though firing unceasingly over my head.

Kemal is said to be anti-Bolshevik. He hates the Bolsheviks and their ethics, but he is also said to be hand in hand with Soviet Moscow.

Just to peep back a moment. The Turks obtained their first foothold in Europe at Gallipoli on the Dardanelles in 1358, after which they immediately proceeded to conquer the greater part of the Balkans, which conquest was completed by the capture of Constantinople in 1433.

Constantinople is pretty ancient. It was founded in 330 A.D. by Constantine the Great, and was first attacked by the Turks in 1356 and carried in 1433, which gives some idea of the number of years the Turks have been amusing themselves around Constantinople. That is to say, nearly six hundred years.

By the end of the fifteenth century the Turks had reached Italy and the Crimea, and by 1550 Rhodes and Hungary had been conquered by them. Who can foretell the future? Only a few hundred years back they marched boldly into Europe. They were only finally expelled from Europe during the Great War, and three years later they were marching boldly in again. One wonders this time whether they will get to the Balkans or be sent back to Asia Minor.

The first Turkish extension in Europe was only stopped by their fleet being destroyed by Don John

of Austria in 1570. That, for the time being, was the finish of their extension.

In 1915 the Turks were actually packed up to leave that small spot round Constantinople which they hold, and if we had fought on for one day longer in the Dardanelles at that time, it would have settled the question. No trouble would have ensued. The Turks were beaten and they knew it.

Having now discussed the question for nearly four years, the Turks have decided to get back to Europe, and the Allies have not decided whether to let them do so, or send them off. Result : that strip of land from the Black Sea to the Marmora, and only about eighteen miles across, on the west of Constantinople, had the Greeks sitting on one side of it and the Turks on the other, with the three Allies, British, French and Italians, still guarding Constantinople as I saw them two years before. Allied soldiers were still squabbling about who ought to prevent street accidents, and still living in thousands in tents outside the famous city ; the only real difference being that the men in rags in the mosques were dressed as victorious soldiers, that their army had acquired tanks (from where ?), that they had a number of aeroplanes (from where ?), that they had been properly drilled by efficient officers (from where ?), and all this accomplished out of nothing, apparently, in two years by one man.

And all the while, the Sultan dwelt inside, in Constantinople, impotent as far as ruling—a mere figurehead—and martial law prevailed. He is called Sultan Muhammad VI. or The Caliph.

The Dardanelles

That rumble of war in the autumn of 1920, which already made kind friends bid me keep away, had gone on rumbling for two whole years, and those Allied troops I saw at Gallipoli, and in tents all round Constantinople and along the Bosphorus, were still there, and more likely to be seriously wanted there than ever. And again comic opera—the Australian soldiers who were tending their comrades' graves at Gallipoli were the first to down tools and offer to uphold the cause for which their comrades had died, viz., to keep the Dardanelles open and to keep the Turk out of Europe.

War boomed again. Why? Simply because for two years there has been no Middle East policy, things have just gone on drifting, and nothing is more expensive in the end than drifting. So now we have all drifted back towards war in the Middle East while gentlemen from all over the world talk Peace at Geneva. Everyone in the Middle East knew what was coming, just as everyone knew what would happen in Egypt and India; but the home-birds neither care, nor take the trouble to understand. History is in the making, and everyone is holding conferences or talking.

One of the attractions of spending a month on an Italian boat from Venice to Beyrout was the possibility of landing for a few hours at seven little towns along the Lower Cilician Coast.

They would all have been sketchable. They would all have been interesting, but not in one of them did I set my foot. French gun-boats lay in

every Cilician harbour and French shells continually rent the air.

All these places were famous in the Great War, and a couple of years later they became famous again. For instance, Alexandretta is the port for Aleppo; Mercina has its charms; Addana has often figured in war telegrams, and so has Adalia, but none of them did I see except from the sea. Tripoli in Asia is also of interest.

One of the most interesting things I saw on that most interesting of journeys was a cloud-burst above Tripoli and the Lebanons in Asia Minor.

It was the usual story. A French officer had come on board. I had requested to go on shore to paint. He had nodded his wise head and replied: "C'est impossible, madame."

"Pourquoi, monsieur?"

"Parceque c'est encore la guerre."

"Quelle guerre?"

"La guerre, madame."

"Mais quelle guerre, monsieur?"

"Mais *la* guerre, madame; la guerre avec les Kemalists."

Boom! rent the air as a big shell flew from a French battleship in the direction of Tripoli and the Lebanons.

No wonder the French evacuated Cilicia a few weeks later, but in the meantime the boom, or perhaps Nature itself, brought a cloud-burst, and within a moment torrential rain was falling over the hills and part of the town, while the rest of the township of Tripoli in Asia was overshadowed by blue sky.

It was a wonderful sight, and our ship literally trembled as the rain water splashed into the sea.

* * * * * *

What will be the position of the stormy Middle East two years hence, say October, 1924 ? Everyone wants everything, no one wants to concede anything, and unless sudden and unexpected wisdom arrives, the picture will become one vast Middle Eastern war.

It cannot go on as it has done for the last three or four years.

Probably nearly as many people died from minor wars and famine and disease from 1919 to 1923 as were killed in the Great War, and unless the League of Nations can become virile and powerful, this disastrous state of discontent, religious strife and disease-toll may go on.

Ireland and the Middle East closely resemble one another. Half the people apparently don't know what they are fighting for. Religious fanaticism is the flame. Socialism, Bolshevism, or whatever you like to call the world discontent, eggs them on, and what is the result ?

Is anyone happy ?

Is anyone contented ?

Is any country prosperous ?

And all the result of the insufferable grasp of the Prussian Junkers and a personal war between Germany and France. It is deplorable.

CHAPTER XI

THE MIDDLE EAST AFLAME—ASIA MINOR

LET us look at Smyrna in the autumn of 1920. The Greeks had just taken possession. The bay was beautiful with its hills behind, the water was blue and calm, and lazily lying upon its breast were two or three idle battleships.

Let us look at Smyrna exactly two years later. The Turks had marched boldly back (September, 1922). Fire, guns, havoc, ruin followed.

How interesting it would be if we could lift the veil another two years to the autumn of 1924, and see what had happened then? If any reader of these rambling pages does so, I hope he or she will let me peruse the jottings.

It is not the slightest good you and I deceiving ourselves into the belief that the Great War of 1914–1918 ended war in the Middle East. It merely kindled a new war, which burst into flame three years later. And which war may kindle still further flame, and finally become a great Holy War of Islam. Who knows?

But, in the meantime, come and jaunt with me round some of the parts while the smouldering flames were burning low. Extinguished they were not. One felt them from Salonica to Constanti-

nople; from Cilicia to Syria. One met them again in Palestine, India and Egypt. For two whole years and four months I wandered in suppressed war zones. Strong hands could have extinguished those flames, but velvet gloves left them ready to burst out with renewed violence between the fingers because of the delay.

It really is extraordinary to think that, in the middle of September, 1922, forty-three different countries' representatives were sitting discussing Peace and all the perfections of Peace at Geneva while the Turks were riding triumphantly into Smyrna.

On Friday, 8th September, 1922, the Greek Army was already busily retiring from the neighbourhood of this town. They seem to have done so in creditable order.

The following day, at noon, near the Smyrna-Aidin Railway Station, the victorious Turks entered at a gallop.

All this was very effective, no doubt, the drawn sabre or revolver in hand, making a general swashbuckling appearance according to an eye-witness; but, in the meantime, you and I can take a more peaceful walk and just have a look for ourselves at Smyrna.

Our boat was not allowed to draw up at the quay-side because the Greeks, so lately put into office, wished to make a little money by insisting on our all landing in their boats, for which we had to pay exorbitant prices. Our own ship was actually within a dozen yards of the land, but, by this very clever arrangement, we had to get down into dirty

little boats, go out quite a long way to sea, round a number of other ships lying in the harbour, and then be brought back again to a landing stage within twenty yards of our Trieste Lloyd boat. This place was called the "Customs House and Passport Office," and anything more dreadful than the experiences of that Passport Office I cannot imagine.

Sitting along the quay were literally hundreds of emigrants, refugees, prisoners of war, and all sorts of dirty, unkempt people. There were Greeks, Turks, Armenians, Bulgarians and heterogeneous Jews, and as the sun was powerful the scent was odoriferous, but among this terrible lot I had to wait, and it seems to me that I should be waiting there now, but for the kindness of an officer in British uniform who, recognizing that I was a little out of the picture, I suppose, stepped forward and asked what he could do for me.

"My fellow-passenger, the manager of the Aidin Railway," I said, "kindly offered to bring me ashore in his boat; but as his clerks and department managers had come off to meet him, I refused his kind proffers so as not to be in the way. Now I am landed here and everyone else seems to be in *my* way."

He laughed, this gentleman in khaki, who turned out to be an Australian officer.

"These Greeks are terrible," he said; "they have only been here a short time, and the chaos and muddle they have made of the whole thing argues badly for the future. Come along and I will see what I can do."

Stepping over half-clad misery, yelling babies,

orange peel, half-eaten melons, bits of sacks and bedding, we emerged into a cleaner atmosphere. Outside I was met, as arranged by my kind manager of the railway, by a gentleman who took me in hand, and so you shall take a walk with me, my friend, along the quay.

It was hot; all the sun blinds were down; people of all and sundry nationalities were drinking at the little open cafés—mostly Turkish coffee, be it said, in tiny cups; many were smoking hookahs, but all thoroughly lazy in the early afternoon sun.

Smyrna was not a particularly beautiful town; it was large, it lay in a fine position on the bay, the mountains behind. Many of the houses were flat-roofed in tropical style, but there was nothing much in the way of fine buildings or fine streets.

Although the Greeks were in possession of Smyrna, every other man seemed to be a Turk and to be dressed in Turkish trousers. The width of these trousers round the knee is extraordinary. They really are not trousers at all, but hugely pleated petticoats, and as the little Zouave coat which accompanies them is generally heavily embroidered, the Turkish costume is extremely pretty, although, like most peasant dresses, expensive, and in former days a matter of family pride, as the clothes generally descended from father to son.

Alas! all these beautiful costumes are disappearing, and the most appalling collection of worn-out, hideous European attire is taking their place. Naturally some of these picturesque old

Middle East parts are assuming as sordid and frightful an aspect as a European dock, where the people are dressed now in anything so long as it is strictly unpicturesque.

It was really very interesting in travelling about, and meeting every sort and kind of man and woman, never to hear anyone say a good word for either the Greeks or the Armenians. Personally, I have known some charming Greeks, but as a nation they seem to be much disliked—anyway, in the Levant; and as for the Armenians, they are laughed at, scoffed at, and abused by all.

Smyrna was once a flourishing port, but, according to all the people on my ship as we entered the bay, its flourishing days ceased with the advent of Greek control.

The harbour, which used to be a busy hive of ships, was almost empty. The passport regulations were terrible on landing, and so bad, in fact, were they and so silly that I was not allowed to land again from the ship before 8 a.m. the following morning, so that I could not catch the only train to the famous Greek ruins on the Aidin Railway, although the manager had kindly arranged for his own secretary to take me, had put a private car at my disposal, and had ordered the food and the horses to meet us, in order that I might make a sketch of those wondrous ruins, and still be back in time for my boat to sail in the evening. But not a bit of it. The new Greek rule said that no one must go on shore till eight o'clock, and the train left at 6 a.m., so that little expedition came to nothing.

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΣΤΡΑΤΙΩΤΙΚΗ ΚΑΤΟΧΗ

ΓΡΑΦΕΙΟΝ ΕΛΕΓΧΟΥ ΔΙΑΒΑΤΗΡΙΩΝ
ΤΜΗΜΑ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΝ

Επιτρέπεται εις τὴν κα Σουίν-
δι καὶ παιδίον του ἀ-
ν ἀνέλθῃ ἐπὶ τοῦ ὑπ[ο]μοσίου
ἀρμαξίου ἀρριλοιπ[ο]ῦ "Γιαλί Σουϊ"
τὴν 5 1/2 μ.μ. ἡμέρας τῆς
πρὸς αὔριον ἐν τῇ ὁρισμ-
μένῃ

Ηλικία

Ἡ παροῦσα ἄδεια ἰσχύει διὰ σήμερον.

Ἐν Σμύρνῃ τῇ 15-9-20

Ο ΕΛΛΗΝ ΑΝΤΙΠΡΟΣΩΠΟΣ
ΠΑΡΑ ΤΩ ΔΙΑΣΥΜΜΑΣΤΙΚΩ ΕΛΕΓΧΩ ΔΙΑΒΑΤΗΡΙΩΝ

Ε ΕΛΕΓΧΟΥ ΔΙΑΒΑΤ

New Greek pass to enter Smyrna, September 28th, 1920.

№ 43

عثمانلی آیدین تیمور یولی قومپانیه‌سی

OTTOMAN (AIDIN) RAILWAY COMPANY

First Class Free Pass
Available for one journey only

برنجی موقع پاسوی
بر دفعه‌یه مخصوصدر.

ایچون پاسو
Pass Mr. Mrs. Cuvedy

جهت اعطا
Reason of issue

میانده
From Smyrna to Ayassoulouk

تاریخنه قدر معتبردر
Avaible for Sept & October 1920.-

تاریخندن

پاسوی تنظیم اولندیغی امثاسی
Issued

تاریخ
28/9/1920.

OTTOMAN (AIDIN) RAILWAY
28 SEP 1920
№
GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE

Old Turkish pass for the railway at the same date.

But Smyrna itself, called "The Pride of the Levant," was a heterogeneous jumble of nations, and it seemed a busy place, although everyone was deploring its lost trade under Greek rule.

After wandering about bazaars with camels laden with fruit, we entered a sort of warehouse. I was ushered on to a mountain of plum pudding. Yes. Literally a mountain of plum pudding, for here, on a big floor like a large barn, lay tons and tons of currants going home for your Christmas fare. These currants were stacked six and seven feet high in solid blocks, almost like miniature hay-stacks; the floor was strewn many inches thick with currants, over which men with bare feet were walking as they shovelled the dried fruit on to the stack, or while bearing loads for weighing to the machines and packing rooms.

It really was an extraordinary sight. One could not believe there were so many currants in the world. Of course, it sounds appalling to visualize Turks, Greeks, Armenians, any sort of folk, walking about bare-footed among the currants of your Christmas pudding; but when one has seen wine made in Sicily, or Central France, or Spain, one knows that the process of wine-making is similar, and mechanical presses, even to-day, are not very common. It is the bare feet of humanity that crush the juice from the grape which makes the luscious liquid that we drink (or that some people drink) and enjoy.

The currant packing in Smyrna for a few weeks is an enormous business. Currants have been brought down from the hills; they have come in

on donkeys and camels from the interior; they have been carried in sacks on men's and women's backs, and they are all thrown on to the floor on the edge of the sea before being packed for transportation.

Passing on, we entered another enormous warehouse. This was for sultanas.

A repetition of the same process—tons of sultanas, dozens of packers, bare feet, and the same barbaric effect.

And these people were all preparing for your Christmas pudding, just as a few weeks later I saw the candied peel being boxed in Damascus to finish the cooking. These were your puddings for the Christmas of 1920.

Alas! your puddings for 1922 will be curtailed, for real war has destroyed much, and fire has completed the rest. Hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of fruit will not be shipped from Smyrna this year.

But we have not done with Smyrna and food, for the most important of all is yet to come.

Everyone has heard of Smyrna figs.

The farmers and villagers each sun-dry their own figs. They then bring them down to the town by the pound or the bushel, according to their wealth. Here they are sorted and piled up in ton weights in the go-downs further along the shore, and this fig business, during the eight or ten weeks that it lasts, is one of the great trades of the world.

Four large steamers, all of one pattern, lay in the bay, and, as a very American man explained to

me (he was a fig agent from the States), those steamers had come for the first time since the war (for the Great War had ended two years before, and the new war only began two years later). Those steamers arrived to bear away four cargoes of Smyrna figs.

"But surely you cannot want figs in America when you grow them in California?"

"Why, marm, the Californian figs can't hold a candle to these figs. These fetch a higher price in our markets, and it pays us to bring big ships to take them away."

So poor little Smyrna can beat the United States in one thing, anyway.

The dried figs are thrown upon the floor. Turkish women kneel round in a circle, pick up the figs from the pile, throw them into large open baskets like trays, grading them according to value. The contents of the trays may be worth fourpence a pound, or one shilling a pound, or even more; but the figs are all sorted by these women, who kneel as they do their work.

The rapidity with which they handle the fruit is amazing, for figs seem to be flying hither and thither in every direction.

As the baskets are filled a Turkish officer, in beautiful bright blue coat, much embroidered in gold, and baggy trousers, notifies to which packing-room each individual basket is to be carried, and a constant stream of baskets goes in and out all day long.

Having arrived at their destination, the figs already being of one size in that particular basket,

it is easy for the packers to pack them into graded boxes ready for export; but it is the Turkish women kneeling upon the floor who get them ready so carefully that, when we buy a box of Smyrna figs, our admiration is aroused as to why and how they are all exactly the same size.

The above description answers the problem.

Squatting myself down upon that one-and-elevenpenny camp stool, I sketched vigorously the scene before me. It was a wonderful contrast of sun and blue sea outside, dark shadows inside, bright bits of coloured clothes, and the golden-grey hue of the figs.

It seemed oppressively hot. Suddenly the whole place shook.

In a moment I knew that it was an earthquake.

I have been in several minor earthquakes in Mexico and other places. Almost before I had time to realize the fact, every woman in the place and the wondrous blue Turkish official had fled.

Never was there quicker exit. They were out of the door and gone almost before the tremble was over.

With a lap full of paints and blocks, and water-bottles and brushes beside me, I sat calmly on.

Blessed is he, or she, who knows nothing. The earthquake did not perturb me because of my innocence, but those wretched people had flown in despair and terrible anxiety to their homes, because there had been a very serious earthquake in Smyrna eight years before, when a large part of the town had tumbled down.

There had not been any earthquake since, but,

naturally, when they felt the first shock, their thoughts at once went to their homes, their husbands and their children, and they fled.

A few houses were wrecked, but no serious damage happened. It was quite a small affair.

Smyrna is, of course, a long way down the Asia Minor coast, far south of the Dardanelles, and it has always been an extraordinarily important town, because it is a great port from the East. What will be its future after being half destroyed by war and fire ?

When I think back to Smyrna on that quiet, hot September day in 1920, an American gunboat and a Greek boat lazily lying in the harbour, those four large steamers waiting for their fig cargo, my mind wanders to sultanas and raisins, and those Turkish women packing figs.

The water was blue then; the heat was oppressive, probably owing to the imminent earthquake. There were minor squabblings between the outgoing Turks and the incoming Greeks, but still, on the whole, Smyrna was at peace.

My kind friend of the Aidin Railway is now dead; Smyrna is a turmoil; the scene is reversed; the outgoing Greeks are begging for an armistice, and have been forcibly made to evacuate Asia Minor; and it is exactly two years since the French officer exclaimed on the Cilician coast: "*C'est encore la guerre.*"

It has never been anything else than "*la guerre,*" and if Kemal Pasha seizes Constantinople and reconquers Thrace *en route* to the Balkans again, the position will tax the statesmanship of all the

Allies to the utmost, and the League of Nations will have to assert itself a good deal more than it has already done if peace is to be maintained.

From the point of view of Great Britain, the capture of Smyrna by the Turks in the autumn of 1922 is the most serious thing that has happened to our Empire—in fact, it is impossible to overrate its gravity. And so you and I have seen Smyrna belonging to the Greeks in 1920, and now we know the town belongs to the Turks in 1922, and who will Smyrna belong to two years later?

When thinking of the Turks, one must always remember they are Mohammedans, and one must also remember there are seventy millions of Mohammedans in India alone, one and all of whom are interested in the affairs of Turkey and their Great High Priest in Constantinople. That is where danger lies and fires smoulder.

Why are Turks so often fat, or is it that their voluminous trousers make them appear so? Whatever it may be, the result remains that the ordinary middle-aged Turkish man is ponderous, and his womenkind even more so.

Smyrna, by the bye, is not a modern town. It was known to history since 1200 B.C. Its position has shifted somewhat, because part of the land has been reclaimed from the sea, and the most ancient city of all was probably about two miles away, nearer to Mount Pagus.

Æolian Greeks established themselves there 1000 B.C., so one sees that the Greeks are not new to that part of the world. After the Greeks came the Byzantines; then the Romans; and the

Knights of St. John, at the height of their power in Rhodes in 1344, also went to Smyrna. Then came Tartars and the Ottoman Turks in 1424. Even the Levant Company began its trade through Smyrna in the seventeenth century.

It was a serious commercial port, this Smyrna; but it had its lighter gambling side, too, in later days: card players believe that Bridge originated in Smyrna; that it came to England through Lord Brougham to the Portland Club in 1894, and that the Bath Club in London started the first Auction Bridge in 1907. Bridge or no Bridge, Smyrna was certainly a pretty busy place as I saw it. Cartloads of carpets lying idly on the quay waiting for transhipment. Enormous piles of tin-plates had just arrived from England—they said hundreds of tons arrived monthly, and a thousand tons a month from England were passed on to Turkey.

War stopped trade dead.

And most of Smyrna has been burnt down, while one hundred and seventy-seven thousand refugees evacuated the place by the end of September, 1922. Thirty-five thousand were taken off by British boats and ten thousand by American ships in five days.

Poor, pretty Smyrna.

Whilst in and out of ports round Constantinople, we came in contact with many Armenians. As a race, they are always supposed to be killed in millions. If all the millions had been killed that report has announced, there could not be a vestige of an Armenian left; but from my own personal

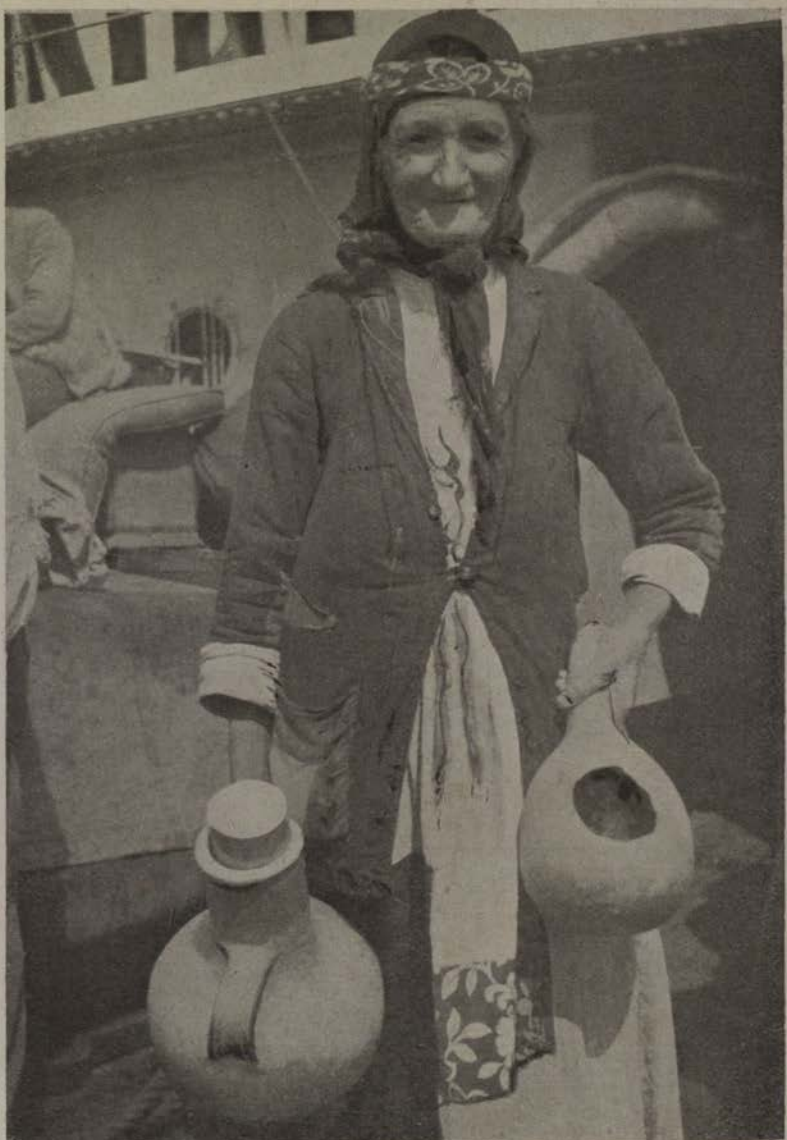
Armenian refugees, Asia Minor.

A Corner of Smyrna

From photos by the Author.

Thirteen-year-old Armenian mother and her baby.

[*To face p.* 196.



An Armenian refugee. From photo by the Author.

experience I know there are still thousands, if not millions, of them left.

They seem to swarm. Six hundred of them came on to my ship at Messina, and travelled along to some unknown port, where we deposited them on the Cilician coast. The French were getting rid of them, for nobody seemed to want them. They certainly appeared a dirty, lazy, ill-conditioned set. They were being sent from pillar to post. They seemed to have sparse worldly goods, poor souls, and they are still being bandied about two years later.

But as a man amusingly said:

"They are like that because of your Glad . . . stone. He make them. He say: 'Poor Armenians, they be massacred. We must help.' You help. England help. They open big the mouth. They get money, they get food, they get gold. They go on open the mouth, more money, more food. They grow lazy. They get more lazy. They open the mouth more big. It all your Glad . . . stone."

The total number of Armenians was about two and a half millions in the days of Gladstone, but only about one million were supposed at that time to be in Armenia. As we have constantly heard of the massacre of Armenians by the million, it really is an extraordinary thing that there should be so many left.

Prolific they certainly are. For women of all ages seem to have babies, and rows of them, and certainly a good many of these poor souls who were nursing their babies looked about seventy,

just as they used to do in the Sokolo at Tangier, where I fondly imagined they were the infants' grandmothers or great-grandmothers, to find they were only their mothers, and their mothers were perhaps twenty-five, or a third of the age they looked.

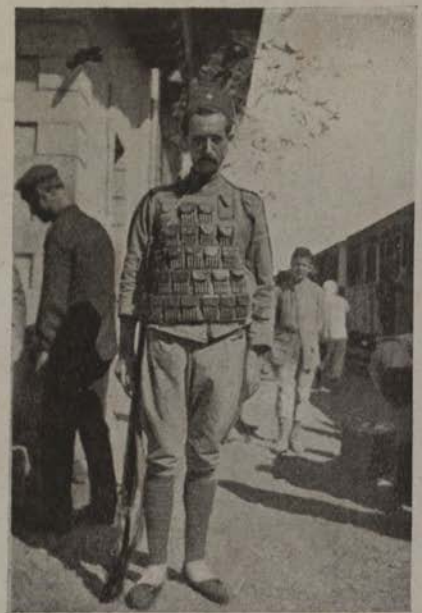
Nearly every Armenian woman had a baby. Six hundred Armenians, and half were women or girls, and there were over fifty small babies. The race is not dying out, I can assure you of that.

Certainly no one ever had a good word to say for the Armenians. And yet, poor souls, they are still being herded about, and still having more babies, no doubt.

Talk about over-population. When one travels in the Middle East, or East, or into Middle Africa, and sees the swarming humanity in every direction, one realizes that this vast population means war—war to live, war for food and sustenance.

After crossing the Atlantic many times, and the Pacific with all sorts of queer emigrants, it seemed impossible one could be surprised at anything in the emigrant line; but, my word! that five weeks at sea in that Trieste Lloyd displayed nations and tribes and religions and sects quite beyond anything one had ever dreamed of.

It is the peoples of the East and Middle East and their picturesque clothes that are so enthralling—I love them!



Syrian policeman at Lebanons Station.

Entrance to Great Mosque, Damascus.

From photos by the Author.

Inside courtyard of Great Mosque, Damascus.

[*To face p.* 198.

Our French guard from Damascus to the Palestine frontier.

Two Druze women in Trans-Jordania.

From sketches by the Author.

CHAPTER XII

THE OLDEST INHABITED CITY—DAMASCUS

FROM Constantinople, through the Greek Islands, I reached Haifa, in Palestine, in October, 1920, after travelling for nearly five weeks, to meet my sister who had arrived from London, and who had also travelled for three weeks to meet me. Finally, a little boat came out, one solitary little boat, and in it sat my sister and my own Arab-man from Cairo. I stood on the deck and watched while the waves shook that little boat. So near and yet so far.

She called up at me: "You have got the plague."

"No, I have not," I called back to the tiny boat below.

"Yes, you have. You have officially got the plague, and no one is allowed to land at Haifa."

This was a cold douche. "Then what am I to do?"

"The ship is being sent on, and you may be taken to the Disinfection Camp at Jaffa, or right on to Alexandria."

This was a worse douche, for anything more horrible could not be imagined than spending a

fortnight in one of those isolation camps. And we had not met for months, and had both travelled thousands of miles for this happy ending.

To make a long story short, Mrs. Francis Goodbody preferred to remain in Haifa after her long journey from England, while my ship and the so-called plague proceeded southwards.

When we reached Jaffa it was so rough we could not land—surf bespattered the rocks—but after many weary hours—a whole night—much talking, signalling, medical inspection, and other trying things, I slipped off with the doctor-man in his boat to the famous township of Jonah fame, once called Joppa.

After being pushed into a small room about the size of a bathing machine, I was asked, in the most weird English, by an Arab doctor in attendance, if I had my vaccination certificate.

"I have not got a certificate," I replied cheerily, "but I was vaccinated three months ago in the Red Sea."

"Must have CER-TI-FI-CATE."

"But I have not got one."

"Must have CER-TI-FI-CATE."

"I tell you I was vaccinated three months ago in the Red Sea."

"No good."

"But if I tell you on my word of honour that I was vaccinated three months ago in the Red Sea, I suppose you will believe me?"

"No, no good," he replied. "Must have CER-TI-FI-CATE."

It seemed, after all, as if I were to be baffled

and taken off to that dreadful camp several days away at Alexandria. Someone came to my aid, and suddenly exclaimed: "You can be vaccinated here, Madame."

"All right," I replied; and so amongst a herd of Arabs I was re-vaccinated in a room the size of a bathing machine at Jaffa. The atmosphere was appalling, my companions were weird, and I felt there might be Death in the needle that was doing the job.

When done I was asked to pay six shillings for the performance. This I did gladly, at the same time smiling at the naïve request. I had gone through those horrors for the sake of six shillings, and would willingly have paid ten times that amount to get away from the odours; but being a bit of a philosopher, cheered myself by thinking: "Well, that's done, and I've got a certificate that will save all further bother."

Not a bit of it. I did not get that certificate, the excuse being that there was no time to make it out. So I went through Palestine for the first fortnight feeling that some dire disease might be within me, and I still did not hold that vaccination certificate. I might, in fact, at any moment be asked to be vaccinated again.

So I paid my fare and wasted my time in going south from Haifa to Jaffa by sea; spent six shillings in being vaccinated; paid for more passport business; paid railway tickets back north to Haifa; spent about fifteen pounds and lost five days, and all because I had "got the plague," or was presumed to have it. What a jaunt, dear friend.

Of course no one should travel soon after war unless they are prepared for the most extraordinary inconvenience and incongruities.

However, all is well that ends well, and after picking up my long-suffering and waiting sister at Haifa, we started again for Syria and the north in a raging storm with tumultuous seas, and only got on board with the greatest difficulty, after waiting many hours for the wretched sailors to even dare tackle the oars.

We arrived the next day at Beyrout, in Syria, in the most gorgeous sunset; the whole place was looking beautiful, and the colours of the little white town and the Lebanons beyond were gorgeous. But land—oh, dear no, not a bit of it. Up popped that plague story again, and although I had only left Beyrout a few days before, and Beyrout was then supposed to be plague-proof; although they assured me at Haifa that, on the contrary, Beyrout was literally infested with plague; we were now assured that it was Haifa that had the plague, and Jaffa had had the plague, and coming from such ports we could not disembark at the non-plague spot, Beyrout. Someone bungled. Who?

The affair was comic, but also mighty tragic, and one wondered after all at what port one should finally land. Anyway, an order came down from the bridge that no one was to go ashore at Beyrout at all. We had already lost six days of our precious time together—my sister and I—and there seemed no chance of getting a start on of any kind. Besides, lurking in my mind was that

vaccination business, with its still unknown developments. What was to become of us ?

We were standing on the deck feeling pretty miserable, only cheered by the lovely sunset when, from the shore started a nice little steam launch, puffing and snorting, and gradually that little steam launch made for our ship. In it were French sailors, who solemnly put into a basket, that was let down from the ship's side, a note, and that note addressed to me ascended from the launch to the upper deck.

The note was from Monsieur le Vicomte Robert de Caix, Secrétaire-Général, to inform me that his launch had been sent to bring us ashore, and that his car, and his A.D.C., Monsieur le Comte Edouard de Sercey, were waiting on the quay to convey us to Grand Sérail (H.Q.).

General Gouraud is the military head of Syria. Robert de Caix is everything else.

Joy of joys. My sister and I and the famous Mohammed, with all our bags and bundles were allowed to land, while the unfortunate other people on the ship remained under supervision. It was not right ; but it was very nice.

After a meal at a horrible hotel and driving round the quaint bit of the town that I had seen only a few days before, especially the large street of ramshackle houses that had been pulled down so that a wide thoroughfare called " Allenby Street " should take its place, we started up that mountain side to Alleh, the summer headquarters of the French Staff.

It is a wonderful drive up the Lebanons, with

never a sign of a Lebanon tree, for they no longer exist in these parts, but unfortunately our housing was not compatible with the serenity of the scene, and we spent a couple of pretty miserable nights at the hotel, which is just a common gambling place and most expensive to boot.

The sooner enterprising people start to build clean, sanitary hotels all over the Middle East, with proper management and the ordinary creature comforts of life, the better for the Middle East. Filthy hotels, little or no sanitation, the constant advent of creepy animals that should be nowhere tolerated, are a perfect curse to travelling in the Middle East. No one minds simplicity, but everybody hates dirt. The dirt of the market place is picturesque; the dirt of the bazaar is interesting, but the dirt of one's bedroom, and the dirt of the preparation of food is absolutely repulsive to the British spirit accustomed to sanitation and cleanliness. In Damascus we were more comfortably housed.

None could have been more charming than the fourteen French officers who composed the staff in Damascus, under Monsieur le Capitaine Catroux. They were all delightful French gentlemen with polished manners, charm of expression and kindliness. But there was not one of them who could speak any English, although Great Britain had handed Syria over to their country, and alas, the cultured gentlemen on the staff did not represent the generality of French officers in Syria.

Alas, and even more alas, there were hardly

any French soldiers there at all. They were nearly all Senegalese, and if you have never seen Senegalese soldiers, you have not missed much in life, and you need not jaunt with me for the pleasure of meeting them, for probably a more hideous collection of men could not be found anywhere. They are very black. They are a very low nigger type, they are rather like children until they are roused, and then they show all the fury of the wild beast.

As one of the most exalted men in Syria, himself a native, said :

" Madam, you have taken away the Turk from Syria to teach Syria civilization, and the French have brought these Senegalese to mix with us. *Ils sont barbares !* "

And verily he was not far wrong. They are indeed barbarians. The French themselves had the greatest difficulty in keeping them in order. The Arab women went in fear of their lives, and the men hated and despised them. French soldiers would have played a very different rôle to these low-class Senegalese, for they would have upheld the dignity of France, which these people certainly do not do. Senegalese are negroids from West Africa. They are mostly Moslems : one, Siki, beat the famous French boxer Carpentier. What joy for the Senegalese.

The Indian is a gentleman. The Egyptian is a gentleman. Even the Turk is a gentleman in comparison to the Senegalese.

General Gouraud had ordered a great procession of the sheikhs from the whole of Syria to take place in Damascus. It was the day that we arrived,

and it certainly was an amazing sight. There were hundreds and hundreds of camels. There were all sorts of gorgeous trappings, and above the trappings the most wonderfully bedecked sheikhs and chiefs of every kind.

They had been ordered to do homage to the great French General, and they knew it was an order that must be obeyed. Consequently there they were, some had come hundreds of miles, and we were lucky enough to see this extraordinary spectacle of Eastern grandeur in the quaint old setting of the oldest inhabited town in the world. Sometimes the camels were almost hidden with orange and red, purple and green, yellow and blue saddle cloths, and saddles or sacks upon which the men sat were of beautiful workmanship; in fact the whole thing was a replica of the Arabian Nights in its most gorgeous display.

Incidentally, a number of the old *khans* of the "Arabian Nights" fame still remain, and inside these squares, the camels are confined for the night. One cannot say stabled, for they merely kneel down upon the stone flags, eat their food and chew the cud. And the roar from these "ships of the Desert" proclaims the proximity of a *khan* to anyone passing through the bazaar, and that night there was little sleep in Damascus for every *khan* was packed with camels and humanity.

That was in September, 1920. The French were already flirting with Kemal (pronounced Kem-ahl), and not long afterwards they made a compact with him while we sat calmly by. All this time the world's newspaper headlines pro-

claimed " Grave Crisis in Syria." " Growing anti-French agitation."

About this time Emir Feisal was proclaimed King of Syria, but that fizzled out, and later he was proclaimed King of Mesopotamia, where he still sits on a seat, three of the four legs of which are propped up by England. A contented Syria and Mesopotamia would be a powerful factor in the economic rehabilitation of the world, but they are far from that in the late months of 1922, and they lie very near the Dardanelles.

Damascus is often called the oldest inhabited city in the world.

It looks like it.

It is begrimed with dirt. Its walls are tumbling down, the stucco on many of its mosques is the worse for wear; in fact, Damascus, standing high in five hundred miles of plain, as an actuality is a great disappointment, but there is more than actuality in the world. Damascus is full of interest and history, and its people are full of charm. It is a city of romance.

The bazaars to-day are a veritable kaleidoscope of the " Arabian Nights " as written centuries ago.

There are Arabs of every tribe, of every sect; Jews from every country; Bedouins from far distant Mesopotamia and Palestine; Indians and Afghans. There are Persians, Kurds, Circassians; there are shepherds from the Russian steppes; in fact, all countries are represented in their most gorgeous hues in Damascus.

Bunches of yellow women seem to glide along the bazaars in numbers, all wearing the most

wonderful orange-coloured garments with large or small black stripes lengthwise upon them; sometimes the orange was as deep as a mandarin, sometimes the yellow was as pale as a lemon, but the robes always harmonized together, and when one saw eight or ten of these females squatting in a circle in the gutter, or before a door, or under the date trees they made the most gorgeous picture of flame in the sunlight.

Yellow was certainly the " fashion " in Damascus for the women that autumn, just as orange turbans of thick and wonderful silk are the fashion in Hebron in Palestine.

One of the features of Damascus, like Constantinople, is the number and variety of its street cries.

Everybody seems to be shouting something, and as a natural result, nobody takes any notice.

A drive down the bazaars is a revelation in sustained invocation of the driver. You proceed to the accompaniment of yells of " Your back, Oh Pilgrim;" " Your leg, my lord;" " Your arm, sir," to say nothing of the machine gun like repetition of " to your left " or " to your right," as the case may be.

Frantic personal appeals to donkeys and camels provide the occasion for further outpourings, and should the camel-man protest, an exhaustive description of the genealogical peculiarities of each contestant is the usual result.

One of the most peculiar cries is that of the orange sellers who shout: " Salutations. Ye oranges. I beg your pardon, O tangerines." The Tangerine is called Yusef Effendi or Mr. Joseph.

I found the reason of this said to be that as the tangerine is easily peeled, it was named after one whose raiment was also easily plucked off.

Fruits of all kinds is everywhere: vegetables, pickled turnip, a Damascus speciality which they gnaw in the streets; fish ranging from small and unappetizing masses of bones which hail from the Barada (the Abana of the Bible), which look like trout and taste like mud; and again those curious fish which come from the lake near Homs, fish, half eel, the flesh being almost black and most unpleasant to look at, but in spite of its richness, are quite good to eat.

In fact the street vendors with their cries, represent the provision stores of Damascus, and it is nearly possible to supply one's table from the wares carried on vendors' heads.

Though meat is not hawked, game, if procurable, can only be had off the casual vendors in the streets. There are no fish or game shops, the game being the surplus product of the fellaheen's chase.

The Arab seldom eats fish, and the Bedouin looks upon the practice as that of a somewhat uncleanly madman.

It is a common thing to see bunches of live hens being carried along head downwards, in search of a customer; but no one seems to protest, except the fowls.

Sour milk is a delectable beverage, but rancid butter appeals less to nose and palate, and requires considerable local knowledge to avoid; it creeps in even more assiduously than garlic in Spain.

Smoking is universal.

In every café, there are rows of hookahs which are lighted as the guests require. Each man carries his own little mouth-piece of quill to insert in the public pipe; but lower in the social scale, this little refinement of personal quill is dispensed with, and the one pipe stem goes from mouth to mouth. So many whiffs for so many coins, apparently.

It is understandable after visiting these places, that death is more likely to occur to the germ, than to the individual, who seems to survive everything.

When one hears the shouts of the shop-keepers in the bazaar, the yells of the cab drivers, camelmen, donkeymen and tray vendors, amounting to a deafening cacophony, one wonders how it is that the Muezzin stands a chance of being heard at all. But once he starts his long drawn cries, calling the faithful to prayer, you realize how it is that they are not only heard, but obeyed.

The strength of the Muezzin's lungs is beyond all dispute.

Yes, those bazaars of Damascus are a joy, a ramp of colour, a panorama of tribes and races, and costumes and uniforms. And jostling in their midst are hundreds of camels from Bagdad, all passing along in single file with tingling bells, bearing burdens of dates, carpets, tobacco, leather, indigo and coffee.

It is the fashion for families to live together; in fact, the son expects to bring his bride to the house of his father, and those brides become, more or less, the servants of the mother-in-law.

Again, when their sons marry the performance is repeated, until the finest house in Damascus claims to possess a family of five hundred beings descended from one man two or three generations back.

Immediately out of one of the dark-arched bazaars, with all their hubbub and their filth, and just opposite one of the funniest old gateways in all Damascus, there is a little turning and at the end is a door. No one would expect the glories within, for when the door is opened one finds oneself in an immense and wonderful courtyard; nay, more, there is a garden, a square well-nigh a little park, with buildings and houses all round. There are orange trees, and banana trees, and figs and bougainvillea trees and scented shrubs everywhere. Semi-tropical vegetation.

This is the chief courtyard of the great family in the city. Off it are the different houses of the relatives. The wonderful baths of ancient Turkish origin, splendid tiles from Persia and beautiful coloured glass decorates the windows. Inlaid stonework set with precious jewels, tesselated pavements, and true barbaric grandeur meets the eye.

The place is indeed a veritable museum in process of restoration, and the chief rooms, as usual, are only three-sided. They are immensely tall and domed, with highly-decorated latticed windows at the top, excellent paintings or tiles cover the walls, and a high divan runs round the three sides of the walls, on which people squat with, or without, cushions, generally without. Very picturesque, very Eastern, and very uncomfortable.

The bulk of the place is marble, but the front, or nearly the entire front, of what should be the room, or, rather, its fourth side, is open to the elements. Such is the chief room of every family. And, good friend, let me remind you it can be bitterly cold in Damascus in the winter. And there are no radiators nor fires. Even the richest shiver. A few ounces of charcoal on a plate won't keep anybody warm.

Leading from this great square are smaller courtyards where dwell other members of the family with their various wives and children, and it was rather amusing to notice that these inner courts, when possessing lower windows, though glassless, were barred with iron as though they were a prison, for the women could not be trusted to remain in their own homes without these iron bars apparently, even when they were in the inner court of the great court which had the only door of admittance into the public bazaars. Poor Eastern women. Their enemy is man. Formerly four rightful wives shared one man; but the fashion is going out because life is so much more expensive than hitherto, and so one lawful wife is as much as most Mohammedans can keep. Another passing custom is the Mohammedan abstention from strong drink. His religion, a very clean and good and wise religion in many ways, forbids it. But that is also going out of fashion, and the money that used to be spent on lawful wives is often spent in unlawful drink. Not that they over-drink, because as a rule they do not. What they do over-drink is coffee. They drink it

all day long. And the cafés at every street corner harbour men by the dozens, reading their papers, drinking their coffee and gossiping. No woman ever enters. The café is the sacred club of the middle-class Oriental.

Before we entered one of these inner homesteads, the great man who was doing the honours, and was still wearing pyjamas in the afternoon, asked us to wait a minute. He popped round a corner, clapped his hands, called out loudly with a mysterious sort of war-whoop, disappeared, and our own Arab-man explained that he was telling the women to get out of the way because strangers were coming into their midst.

As he ushered us into his own particular courtyard, where there was a magnificent marble basin the size of a room, full of water, with lilies and goldfish, we saw the last skirts of women scuttling down passages to get out of our way. Even European women must not gaze on these *purdah* Easterns, or semi-Easterns. In Constantinople it was quite different. There the ladies dress in the latest fashions, and for going out merely put on satin cloaks with tight hoods, almost as tight as a skull cap, and mighty becoming, below which, sometimes—but not always—thin white gauze veils cover the nose, mouth and chin. So coquettish have these purple and blue, and bronze and brown, maroon and grey cloaks become, and so often have the veils been discarded, that lately the great Turkish Caliphate has ordered that the women of the Moslem religion must in future be more decorously dressed.

The Damascus ladies were not nearly so emancipated, however, and their feminine curiosity could not be trampled out merely because they were sent away, so when we left we could see them all peeping from behind the iron-barred windows, as we passed out. Probably they had never seen anything so extraordinary as a couple of Englishwomen before. Our height was a subject of constant interest.

As we were leaving this enormous family mansion in Damascus our host brought us what looked like an extra large white carnation. That, he explained, through the interpreter, was a most amazing flower. It changed colour, and before the ladies had travelled two days to Jerusalem, it would have changed colour several times.

We smiled at the idea; it sounded rather like a story from the "Arabian Nights," in whose haunts we then stood. However, the flower remained white all day and, having worn well so far, we floated it on a tumbler of water at night, its petals being so big that it covered the tumbler's edges.

Lo, and behold, the next morning the white flower had disappeared from the tumbler, and a beautiful large pink carnation had taken its place. Worn again during the day, it turned absolutely white, and towards evening assumed a heliotrope hue, so the Arabian Nights flower was a reality and not a dream. This bloom may, of course, be well known to botanists, but I have never met it in any other part of the world. A fairy flower veritably.

When one makes a call at one of these multiple establishments in Damascus, however grand the house, a small child opens the door. It is not a man's job to open the door; the women must not be seen, and, therefore, a child is the only available person to admit the most important visitors into the most important homes.

Once inside, one is always offered the hospitality of coffee and sweets, and one dare not leave until they arrive, although they often take a long time to appear. No one ever hurries in the East. The coffee, of course, is Turkish coffee, in very, very tiny cups, with a large amount of sugar. An ordinary Syrian sips thirty or forty such cups *per diem.* Personally, I loved it; but, then, everything always seems exactly to suit its own country, and even wines, when exported, lose their charm as a rule, unless of the heavier kinds.

There seems to be nothing in Damascus they cannot turn into a sweet of some kind. The sweetstuffs of Damascus are famous; they are really candied fruits. As the climate is hot, every form of plum, apricot, peach, melon, grape, greengage and nut grows. These are soaked in sugar preparations, and when served they are most luscious. Put in tins or bottled they last for years; but when they are freshly made they are perfectly delicious, especially the walnuts. Those candied fruits reminded me of the wonderful melons in Mexico. Anyone who has tasted these melons will never forget them, nor will anyone who has tasted the fresh Damascus fruit ever forget that, either.

For packing, round, common wooden boxes are used, quaintly stencilled in Arabic design, and these boxes of dried fruit are sent all over the world; but, of course, nothing is ever so good when it has been packed as it is when it is freshly made. These stencillings are "Damascene," for it must be remembered that damask silk and linen were first made in Damascus in the twelfth century.

Walking along the bazaars, one constantly sees brown linoleum, great sheets of rolled-up or folded brown linoleum. What on earth could they do with all that brown floor covering, one wondered, when an Oriental rug was the only thing used as a rule? The brown linoleum was the apricot pulp touched on before. Think of it. Tons and tons of apricots pulped until they are rolled out like linoleum, and about half an inch thick, a couple of feet wide, and several feet long. Even after being told the solution of the mystery we had to learn its use. That apricot pulp is exported all over the world to jam manufacturers, so often in Great Britain or America one is eating jam which started its life in far-away Syria.

CHAPTER XIII

BAALBEC—IN THE LEBANONS

ONE of the things I had determined to see in Syria was the ruins of Baalbec; but it is one thing to make up one's mind to do a thing, and another thing to do it, especially in war days.

Baalbec is only thirty-five miles from Damascus, half-way across the Lebanons towards Beyrout. Thirty-five miles is not much, is it, for you and I on our long jaunt? But no thirty-five miles ever took more arranging, cost more money, or were more troublesome.

The train refused to go because of strikes and bombs and combat generally; but after a great deal of difficulty, we discovered there was a motor car in Damascus, the one single motor indeed that might be hired. The French Staff could not lend either of their two cars, as they were busily engaged on military business. Therefore, the only thing to do was to negotiate with the proprietor of this single car.

We wished to go one day very early, stop the night, and return the next day rather late. For that seventy-mile jaunt he demanded twenty-five golden sovereigns. That was perfectly ridiculous, and it took many days of haggling, helped

by our British *liaison* officer, before the price was finally beaten down to fifteen pounds.

We were to start at six o'clock in the morning at the latest, and, with luck, should have done thirty-five miles by eleven o'clock; but we had no luck. The car itself was not so bad; old and war-worn, it is true, but still its seating accommodation was all right; but that jaunt took us from six o'clock in the morning until nine o'clock at night—namely, fifteen hours; and to traverse those thirty-five miles we had fifteen punctures. You may laugh, my friend, and be glad you did not go that jaunt with me.

Nevertheless, it was a wonderful journey, and what was most interesting was to see the stacks of shells by the roadside, and the thousands of empty shell cases in near proximity, for the French had been fighting here a very short time before. We never met a single soul in all those fifteen hours but a few Bedouins wandering with their camels. We could easily have been robbed—in fact, the whole performance was distinctly dangerous, for the people were very warlike in those days.

Our driver and the Colonel became thoroughly worn out struggling with tyres and punctures and heat, and it remains a never forgettable day of anxiety and fatigue; for we knew that once really benighted in the Lebanons, any catastrophe might befall us.

Sometimes the Bedouins were polite, sometimes their looks were sinister, and it was not until the Arab man explained that we were British and

not French that things became more pleasant, for Syria at that time disliked the French.

And now for Baalbec. After that perfectly horrible journey, it was wonderful, indeed, to land into quite a comfortable hotel. The hotel had been put up before the war, and during the war had been turned into an Australian hospital, under Lord Allenby's rule; therefore, the proprietor spoke English, and kept the place spotlessly clean. Its simplicity and cleanliness were delightful, the food was good, and the kind interest shown in our welfare was unceasing.

Hot water was brought without being asked for; in fact, we were thoroughly well housed.

And what of Baalbec. I have seen practically all the Greek temples of Sicily and Egypt. They number dozens. I have seen the famed Acropolis at Athens, small in size, great in repute; but nothing has ever amazed me more than the marvellous, the huge, stupendous ruins of Baalbec. The height strikes one with awe. The Corinthian pillars stand eighty-eight feet. The extent of the area covered, the wonderful condition of preservation—in fact, Baalbec is a revelation; and for a person like myself, who really knows nothing about archæology, they are the most wonderfully impressive Greek ruins imaginable. It was worth all the discomfort, all the misery and fatigue of that fifteen-hour trip just to see the view from the top of the Lebanons, and live for a couple of days amid the wonders of ancient building at Baalbec, raised to the Sun god Baal, and made into a Roman colony by Julius Cæsar.

This is not a guide book; you and I, good friend, are just jaunting together and scribbling it all down a couple of years later from memory. So if you want to know all about the wonders of Baalbec, you can look up some of the many learned volumes there are on its former splendour and erection. It was as impressive to me as the Giza Pyramids at Cairo, the Taj Mahal at Agra, the inside of the Damascus mosque, the ruined Aztec cities of Mexico, the Girgenti Temple, or the Minarets of Santa Sofia.

Whenever one expects to be extremely clever, one generally ends in being extremely foolish. I intended to be extremely clever in Syria on the question of money, for, really, the troubles of landing in Greek ports and Turkish ports, and never knowing exactly how much one would require, and having bits left over, or not enough to go round, and being distracted with the value of the odd scraps of paper, had been very upsetting.

Arriving originally at Beyrout, I thought I would be particularly clever, and go to a proper bank and change a proper twenty-five pounds into Syrian money. It took a lot of counting and arranging, and finding the exact amount of the Syrian exchange for that day; but I was finally handed rolls of notes and small coins, and departed, feeling, that whatever happened, I should have enough currency to meet contingencies.

But my cleverness proved very stupid. The first thing the hotel manager said was that the charge for his room with board was twenty-five shillings a day, English money.

"Oh," I gladly replied, "I have it in Syrian money."

"I won't take Syrian money," he said.

"You won't take Syrian money? But this is Syria."

"I won't take it," he replied, shaking his head vigorously. "It is of no value; it's up one day and down the next day. We cannot count, we can do nothing with it. I will only count by English money or Egyptian money. Egyptian money is English money, too. By those money I count. I will not take Syrian money."

And would you believe it, my friend, I wandered round Syria with that twenty-five pounds worth of Syrian money, and not a single person would relieve me of it. The shops refused to take it because of the exchange; the hotels would not look at it; in fact, it was valueless everywhere, and, finally, I had to pay a visit to a bank in Damascus and persuade—yes, persuade—them to take it off my hands at a considerable loss.

Aleppo had always sounded a particularly interesting place. One had heard so much of it in the War, and as it was not very far off—either the war or Aleppo—nothing is very far off in Syria—we decided to go to A'eppo, which is a most important junction of the Bagdad, Beyrout and Damascus line, and also the Hedjaz line to the south. Aleppo has also become more or less a clearing house for the Port of Alexandretta, which, for the moment, is nominally held by the French.

Aleppo seemed easy because it is on a railway line. But no one can have any idea of the

dislocation of traffic in Syria at that time. Most obstinately that train refused to go to Aleppo; the roads were also impassable, partly because of brigandage, and partly because they had never been mended during the French occupation, and were still war-worn and weary.

Sometimes we thought we could go. There were rumours that a train would leave on the morrow; then we found it was impossible, and the next piece of news, "truly authenticated," of course, was that the French had already evacuated Aleppo. The following day this would be denied; proclamations would be put forth that nothing of the kind had happened; but one could not always believe "proclamations," because for a long time after the French had left Cilicia people maintained they were still there.

However, there is no doubt about it, the French very nearly did evacuate Aleppo in the early days of October, 1920; and, as far as I am personally concerned, all this uncertainty and indecision ended in our never getting to Aleppo at all. It is not only the high road to many parts of the East. It has played an important part in the old world's history. It will play an important part again in the new world's history, for there is no doubt history is in the making, and making on a very large scale over the vast areas of the East and Middle East to-day.

The Kemalists were just beginning to feel themselves, and to coquette with the French, who shortly after I left Syria made a pact with them—some said behind our backs; but if we were stupid

enough at home to let the opportunity slip, it was our own fault and no one else's. For two years the French really tried to keep that pact. They did many stupid things, but they kept that pact. Not so the Turks. I wrote in September, 1920, "that the French would have to evacuate Syria just as they had been forced to evacuate Cilicia under my very eyes"—and two years later. I repeat, they will have to go—largely because of the interference of Mr. Crane, an American; but if they go, what will they do about their Mandate?

The Middle East is a seething pot, and something will have to be done, and done quickly.

Why, oh, why don't our statesmen travel? How can they understand the minds of far-away lands, and why will they always interfere with those who do? The Oriental is inscrutable.

The more one goes about the world one sees:

1. The necessity of choosing the very best man available for a job.

2. Letting him run his own job with a free hand as circumstances dictate.

3. Summing up the result, and, if bad, dismissing him; and, if good, supporting him more and more from home.

4. Every official should be better paid and his dignity upheld in every way. Complete confidence should be imposed in him, and he must feel sure of home support. It is like a racecourse. If rider and horse are to be bumped into on every side, if obstacles are put across his path, if children run over the course, he rides for a fall, neither creditable to horse nor

man from sheer outside interference. Give the horse his head and let him win through if he can.

5. Confidence and support are encouraging masters. Constant interference paralyses initiative.

6. Our Empire has much to do to keep her head above water; and Downing Street, and Downing Street alone, is to blame if she goes under.

The Mandate given for Syria and Palestine was only signed at the end of July, 1922, and that signing may be the beginning of very serious troubles for both as it does not please the Arabs.

Apparently Feisal's arrival in Damascus in 1918 was planned to give him as much prestige as possible. British and Australian troops were held back whilst Feisal's levies were hurried up to make their entry into the city in the guise of the Great Arab Army, which had delivered the land from the Turk.

This honour to Arab troops, unwarranted by their military efforts, was the outcome of that grandiose dream of an " Arab block " under British tutelage which would extend from the Red Sea and Mediterranean to our Indian Empire, the Arch dreamer being Colonel Lawrence ; the puppets of his fancies being the family of the King of the Hedjaz HUSSEIN, each of whose sons was to have a kingdom created for him :

1. Ali, to rule in the Yemen.

2. Feisal to be King of Syria (That failed and he is now King of Mesopotamia).

3. Abdulla, who was to be King of Mesopotamia, but owing to strange circumstances is now King of Transjordania, and whose pastimes appear to be annoying the English and organizing troubles for the French.

4. Zeid, whose kingdom was even more nebulous.

Unfortunately, looting broke out immediately after Feisal's grand arrival, and the Australian cavalry on entering the city, had more trouble from these noble liberators than from any Turkish force to be found there.

However, no efforts were spared to magnify the importance of Feisal and his followers, and it was apparently hoped that the foundations of an administration having been firmly laid whilst the British troops were in occupation, Feisal would have the intelligence and capacity to keep order in his zone of administration even after the evacuation by British troops.

A sum of £150,000 a month (provided jointly by France and Great Britain) was adequate for the maintenance of law and order.

The fact that there was one officer to about five men in the Arab Army could hardly have proved a severe drain on this sum, even had the officers been paid with any regularity. According to fairly reliable testimony, one aspirant to military honours is known to have entered Feisal's " palace " as a policeman, and emerged as a fully fledged Lieut.-Colonel on the staff some twenty minutes later.

Syria was at this time divided into Eastern and Western zones, the latter comprising the Littoral

and held by the French, the former comprising all territory east of the Lebanons, and the Aleppo Rayak railway which includes " the four towns : " Homs, Hama, Aleppo and the capital, Damascus.

The latter was the seat of the Arab Administration under Feisal.

The relief of all British troops in Syria was completed by December, 1919.

After they quitted Damascus, Feisal was left in undisputed control of the Eastern zone. Only Colonels Toulat and Cousse, and Captain Des Hayes, remained to represent the French, who had equally undisputable rights of political control of the country.

Feisal failed, and fled before the advancing French troops.

Feisal himself is well known in London drawing-rooms, and is a charming gentleman as many can testify. When he lived in Berkeley Square, he wore ordinary European clothes, and discarded his Arab head-shawl. Being pale of skin for his race, he looks more like a handsome Italian than an Eastern. He speaks no language but his own, although he understands a little French, in which he can just say a few disjointed sentences. His main prop and stay is General Haddad, who, on the contrary, speaks such perfect English no one would ever take him for anything else than a Britisher; but then Haddad was educated in England.

French military occupation of Damascus, and the whole of the Eastern zone, took place in July, 1920, just before my arrival, and everything was therefore very new and interesting.

The French thereupon divided the country up into States, viz.:

Grand Liban. Etat de Damas.
Etat D'Aleppe. Mont Druze.
Territoire des Alaouites.

This French system of the old Roman " divide et impera " is a political expedient which renders them great service at the present time, but probably no thinking Frenchman looks upon Syria as anything else than a burden, justified only by the fear of British influences spreading in the East.

The establishment of a Federation of States on the Jura principle, as foreshadowed by General Gouraud, means probably that these States will all depend directly from the *de facto* capital of Turkey (whether it be Angora or Constantinople, remains to be seen). France, while keeping her hold on the Liban, will cut her commitments by granting these puppet states their " Independence " in return for commercial concessions from them, i.e., from the Turkish capital which will control them.

France may then gain the advantages of having reduced military liabilities; posed as the Protector of Islam; and as the Mandatory Power that has no other designs than the usual high-flowing ethics of which most political speeches on such subjects are made.

It is unlikely that they will fail to contrast such a policy with that practised by England in Egypt and Palestine.

The fact that cannot be ignored, however, is that a country administered under the Turks cheaply as three vilayets, roughly from Aleppo to

Jerusalem, has now become a mass of small and expensive administrations. It stands to reason that, economically, the Middle East is quite unable to meet the expense of its present form of administration.

As regards the French evacuating Syria, one must remember they took it over, first from their historical association, second, an active desire to counteract any ill effects to French prestige that might arise from an overwhelming British preponderance; and thirdly from the miasma which papers themselves were continually referring to as "le Mirage Syrie." That is to say, a land which is to outrival Egypt as a cotton producing country (the cotton has not yet been sown); as a world's oil supply (oil has not yet been tapped); and as an inexhaustible granary (the latter can fully develop under settled conditions of peace, improved means of transport, and the development of harbours). The two latter require capital. Are the French prepared to supply this for their dream?

In the meantime, the Feisal fiasco provided the opportunity to annex the richest part of the Damascus State, the valley of the Bekâa to the Grand Liban.

This practically assures the Grand Liban as a paying proposition. Whatever happens to Syria as a whole, the Grand Liban will not be taken from France without a struggle.

Having spent about three weeks in Damascus, kindly and hospitably entertained by the French Staff, we felt it was about time to depart if we were to get through to Central Africa before the

great heat of summer. Easier said than done, for all the five weeks we were in Syria the country was so disturbed that the trains and the posts and the telegraphs only worked intermittently.

However, the opportunity came when we knew overnight that a train might proceed at daybreak to the Palestine Frontier.

We were up in the dark by candle light; we walked across the bridge to the charming little station, where apparently people had spent the night waiting for such an event as a train going south, and the arrangement of passports and luggage, intermixed with humanity, was certainly weird in the early morning light.

It was a little train, and a compartment had been reserved for us about the middle. We were the only ladies travelling. There were a few market women, but practically the train was composed of men, and on the platform stood a number of soldiers.

To our surprise, just before starting, these soldiers were marshalled into order, and after a good deal of shouting and arranging, divided up, and went to either end of the train.

Colonel G. L. E. Easton, our brilliant British *liaison* officer, wearing the one and only British uniform left in Syria at that time, saw us off, and a few minutes afterwards a charming French officer, clicking his heels and saluting politely, asked if he might sit in the carriage.

"Certainly," we said, whereupon he took his seat.

Entering into conversation, as it seemed likely

we might spend the day together, I asked him if he had often made that journey.

"Often!" he replied, laughing, "très souvent, madame. Je suis commandant de jour."

"Commandant de jour?" I exclaimed, not having the least idea what he meant.

"Parfaitement," he replied. "Commandant de jour."

And then he explained that when the train did go, which was rare, forty soldiers accompanied it, and that at the back of the engine there were two wagons containing twenty soldiers, with their mitrailleuse guns and an officer, and at the back of the train were a further twenty French soldiers with their guns, and likewise their officer, while he was the colonel in command of the train in case anything serious happened en route.

We had been told overnight that we must take any necessary refreshment with us, as every single railway station had been demolished by the Arabs along the railway, and, consequently, we were provided with sufficient food, which we were able to share with our delightful officer; but as the day wore on things became pretty interesting, especially as we neared Dārāa, the junction of the Hedjaz and Bagdad railways.

Here, on the 20th August, 1920, exactly six weeks after the British had formally evacuated Syria and handed it over to the French, the Arabs had shown their indignation at the change of rule by swarming down upon the train at Dārāa, murdering twelve officials who were in it, among them a Cabinet Minister, smashing every carriage

to bits, till nothing but the wheels remained, tearing up rails, destroying stations and working general havoc. We passed down about six weeks later, and only a couple of trains had got through intermittently before us. Our soldiers were constantly at attention, and everyone was on the alert the whole day. In the distance peace was sometimes disturbed by the sound of a shot. It was an exciting and interesting ride.

This place Dārāa, in the Hauran, is an extremely important station, for it is the great loading point for the wheat that comes in from Transjordania.

As no trains had passed through for weeks, there were hundreds of sacks of wheat along the line, and this wheat is particularly famous, as the fertility of the land between here and Mesopotamia is such, that not only is a vast quantity grown, but it is of good quality.

The whole of it for that year had been commandeered by the French; but up to that moment they had not been able to fetch it, so there it lay.

It certainly was an extraordinary experience, that half-hour we spent at Dārāa, for the station was windowless, the doors had gone, bits of débris were still visible and the telephones were lying in tangled masses. Our forty soldiers were marshalled on the rails " at attention," while a certain amount of wheat was allowed to be put on to our train.

As we passed on, the military guards on the railway bridges were doubled, and we heard five

distinct shots fired very near us and just south of Dārāa. Even our colonel sat up, and one realized what a dangerous trip we were undertaking.

Along the line we saw a number of Druse, one of the most warlike tribes of these parts; in fact, the Druse men are constantly fighting the French; but the Druse women wore such beautiful dresses and looked so charming, that one could not imagine they could ever be fighting anyone.

It was rather tantalizing not to turn to the left and go to Bagdad, from which the camels were plodding towards us with their carpets, but I never felt more in a war zone than I did on that trip. Menace was in the air, and truly so, for a day or so afterwards there was more trouble on this very line, and the train service had to stop again, so we only just got through. It is an interesting journey in any case, and crosses some of the most fertile land in those regions; but it is inhabited by endless wandering tribes, who cut one another's throats when they have nothing else to do.

These Druse, by-the-by, are the tribe which Emir Abdulla stirred up against the French at the time when Feisal was crowned King of Mesopotamia in August, 1921.

As the day wore on it began to get very hot—in fact, it got hotter and hotter, and then we realized that we were nearing the Sea of Galilee, formerly called Tiberius.

Into the Sea of Galilee runs the River Jordan from the Lebanons; out of the Sea of Galilee runs the Jordan again down to the Dead Sea,

but from the Dead Sea it is seen no more. It goes in, but it does not come out. Christ, as all will remember, was baptized in the Jordan.

How strange it was to go down several hundred feet below sea-level, and to feel the overpowering heat after the cold of crossing the watershed, and having had a not altogether comfortable trip of ten hours, it was somewhat refreshing for an official in white drill to ask if I was Mrs. Alec Tweedie, and then say:

"Colonel Holmes, the manager of the Palestine railways, has sent his car for you, and tea is ready, madam."

Think of the difference: our horrid little compartment, our exciting journey through Syria; food out of paper packets and not enough to drink, and in a moment to step across a siding and find a comfortable large saloon with a good English tea and cakes, and a delightful Arab servant in attendance ready to convey us the rest of our journey through Palestine. Now we were under British rule.

At that time the British were still loved in Palestine; that is more than can be said since England has insisted on upholding the Balfour Declaration, one of the most foolish things we ever did; but of that more anon.

CHAPTER XIV

PALESTINE UNDER CIVIL RULE—AND ITS FUTURE

WHAT a change.

And one could not say for the better. The military sway had gone on my return a year later (November, 1920). The civilians ruled. No one was happy. No one was contented, and a growing dislike for the British was fired by every fresh landing of undesirable aliens. The difference in politeness was marked. Things had changed, and changed sadly.

Six hundred low-class Russian Jews had come down in my own boat from Constantinople; they looked like Bolshevists and on the ship behaved like them. People on board asked me:

"Why was England allowing such people to go to Palestine? They are undesirables, such as America would not permit to enter her shores on any pretext whatever."

On landing at Jaffa these strange people were immediately joined by others, who formed a procession with red flags, and murder followed. For months that episode of revolution did not get into the papers, but as things became worse it leaked out, even in England, and latterly some restrictions have been made. But too late, the seeds are sown.

Palestine under Civil Rule, and its Future

The real old Jews of Palestine, and there are families who have been there for two hundred years, hate the new-comers, whom they look upon as more revolutionary than Jew; and frankly tell one so.

The military control had gone, and the civil High Commissioner was a Jew.

Sir Herbert Samuel is a gentleman. There is no doubt about it, he means to do the right thing. He tries to do the right thing, but a Jew should never have been sent to be the head of Palestine, with its enormously outnumbering Arab population. That was a fundamental error. In spite of all the new immigration, there are not 5 per cent. of Jews in Palestine to-day and there are over 93 per cent. of Arabs. Samuel is badly handicapped.

I am not prejudiced against the Jews—far from it—and you may not be either; but my sympathies are all for listening to a people who refuse to have an alien race put above them to govern them.

The Romans conquered Britain two thousand years ago, but is that any reason why a handful should invade and rule us to-day? The Jewish position is analogous.

Then again, seven of the governorships (out of about twenty) had, under the new régime, been given to Jews. Surely that is rather a heavy proportion, when one considers the vast Arab population. Of course it is difficult to write on these matters, as they so constantly change, but one fundamental fact is certain. The population of Palestine is Arab. A small percentage only is Jewish. The old owners of the land are Arabs; new Jewish immigrants are pushing them out.

Well, they don't like it. More, they won't have it. They won't be ruled by Jews—and trouble is growing, slowly, silently, but none the less surely.

Across the Palestine stamps is now printed "E. I." (Eretz-Israel) in Hebrew, meaning "The Land of Israel." The Arabs resent the Hebrew language being forced upon them on every side, and unless the Government renounces its Zionist policy there is no doubt the Arabs are fully determined to fight.

Yes, that Balfour Declaration of 1917 has played much mischief, perchance because it was capable of so many readings. "Palestine for the Jews" stinks in the nostrils of the Mohammedans.

Almost at once the Jews formed themselves into a big council. A Jewish Government was appointed. Government in Palestine is an autocracy under an Administrator, but as all the important posts seem to be going to Jews, it is mighty near a Jewish Government. They are creeping into office on every side. It is inevitable. From their point of view they are perfectly right. BUT, please remember that the population of Palestine is of the Islam faith. They are angry.

From the little I know of Lord Balfour personally he is very charming, but the larger part of him I only know politically as a sage, diplomatically as a gracious gentleman, and scientifically as a man who might probably have attained a great position for himself had he not been occupied in other ways. But, with all his gifts and charms, I certainly feel that Mr. Balfour was wrong in his Palestine Treaty of 1917, and the more one travels, the more one sees of things in foreign lands, the more certain one

is that such questions as Palestine, or indeed the whole Middle East, would never have arrived at such a condition of muddle if the men on the spot, official and otherwise, had been listened to and consulted at every turn.

Our members of the House of Commons are mostly amateurs as regards Eastern questions, amateurs who refused in this case to listen to the handful of men who really knew Palestine and had personal knowledge of what they were talking about. Difficult problems must be attacked by experts, and not by amateurs, be they politicians or policemen.

Lord Balfour, who is generally so far-seeing and wise, seems to be extraordinarily short-sighted in his persistent refusal to listen to warnings about Palestine. If we go on alienating the Arabs of Palestine, we shall end by alienating the Mohammedans of the world, and Islam will be against us.

Once Islam is solidly against us, Holy War ensues, which may go on for ever.

Procrastination works more evil in the end than a mistake. A mistake can be corrected, and, once put right, may be all the better for having been made, for the subject has probably been well thrashed out through the fault. But to go on putting off and putting off a decision brings far more fearful consequences than making a wrong decision in the first place, owning up to it and altering it.

For instance, the Palestine Arab Delegation spent a whole year in London (1921–22) struggling to get interviews with Lord Curzon, which never

ended in any decision. That procrastination was naturally known all over the Middle East, just as was the lengthy putting off of a settlement of the Turkish question.

Nothing is so detrimental as this procrastination. Had Gandhi been put in prison when I landed in India, in January, 1920, as everybody said he would be, those eighteen months of turmoil, when he stirred up a seething cauldron, would not have happened. It was done in the end; but the mischief was accomplished first. The same with Egypt, the same with Palestine, and again the same seems likely with the Sudan.

The more I travelled in the East, and the more I have heard since, the more certain I am that we should never have given up Egypt or India, which British blood and brains and gold have made, and that we should never have taken on Mesopotamia or Palestine; the first because it is too expensive, and the second because the Arabs must be left to work out their own salvation. Incidentally there are Jews in the world in sufficient thousands to finance Palestine if they are so anxious about it. And, it is up to them to make friends with the Arabs, and work in harmony with them. It is not our job to be the go-between or pay the bill.

The hastily-worded Balfour Declaration must go if there is ever to be peace in Palestine. That Delegation of Arabs sent to England for the purpose of enlightening the British Public on their own country and its wishes, and to negotiate with the Government in the hope of finding a solution,

by its persistency and moderation gained the sympathy of the British Public, and when the mandate for Palestine was discussed on June 21st, 1922, in the Upper House, the Lords defeated Lord Balfour by sixty votes to twenty-nine. The Commons threw it out.

What the thinking Arabs, both Mohammedans and Christians, want is a national government, under the ægis of Great Britain as mandatory, and control of immigration.

THE ARABS WANT GREAT BRITAIN, BUT THEY DO NOT WANT ZIONISM.

Those eleven words sum up the whole situation.

On 11th September, 1922, the British Mandate for Palestine was proclaimed in Jerusalem.

Lord Allenby, that brilliant leader and general, was present, and Sir Herbert Samuel, the Jewish High Commissioner, took three oaths of allegiance, to the King, his office and the people. So far, so good. But the 93 per cent. of Arabs in Palestine disapprove of the mandate. They disapprove of the modern Jewish settlers, mostly of the worst possible type, as we have seen, that are being foisted upon them, and they showed their disapproval by shutting all their shops and taking no part whatever in processions and ceremonies.

How can such a mandate ever be successful? It is only the forerunner of further wars.

But to leave racial questions for a moment—let us take a little jaunt—you and I. We really must make another attempt to see the Red Sea and Jericho? Don't you think so?

It was November when I returned, and very

hot, but still it rained, and it was with the greatest difficulty that a hired Ford was persuaded to do the trip to the banks of the Dead Sea and along the Jordan. The owner wanted twenty pounds for the day, and no power on earth would induce him to lower his extortionate demand to less than fifteen pounds. Incidentally he was a German Jew, so fifteen golden sovereigns I had to pay for that outing. We started early and returned late, and I made four little sketches. Two good and two bad. And let it be owned, mentally, bodily and physically, I was never more tired in my life.

Well may tradition say " Go to Jericho " when you want to get rid of anyone, for going to Jericho was no light matter, even in 1920, and returning even more difficult. The road had been churned up by British artillery, and was not fully remade. One descends 4,700 feet from Jerusalem, for the Dead Sea is 1,200 feet below sea level: hence its heat, and the climate is almost tropical.

So this was Jericho!

What a small, insignificant place. A place with a great name, and nothing more. Every mile as we had descended it had appeared hotter and hotter, until at last the Jordan Valley literally became a vapour bath. One would not choose Jericho as a particularly delectable spot to stay at.

" Go to Jericho " is just as appropriate a term as ever, because you can't go to Jericho. It's a mighty task. Only if the weather has been fine is the road, with its steep gradients and sharp turns, feasible for a car. It makes a very long day to get there and back from Jerusalem. There is no

decent place to stop at when you get there. It is what one might call " the edge of beyond."

There is an attraction, in spite of the wild barbarity of its people, however, and that they cannot spoil. Its attraction is its view.

We picked up the most terrible-looking ruffian, or rather the terrible-looking ruffian picked us up, by climbing on to the step and refusing to move. He assured our Arab attendant it was impossible to get to the Dead Sea without his aid, as the quicksands had shifted, the Dead Sea fruit was thick, the path was obliterated, and a dozen more reasons why he, and he alone, must accompany us. This he said in Arabic. That was translated into English, and then we retranslated it into German for the Jewish driver.

Much haggling about the price. The ruffian had to be forcibly told he would get so much *only if* we got to the Dead Sea *and back* to Jericho in safety. They have a little way of doing half the journey and refusing to move unless paid extra, so it takes a bit of time to get things properly arranged in advance in these lands.

Well, he earned his money. We should certainly never have got there without him. Often he made the chauffeur climb up or drop down an impossible-looking place, or force the car through water or mud that no ordinary driver would ever have attempted, and at which our German Jew jibbed; but he also was to be paid by results, and our safe return to Jerusalem.

In war days wire netting helped matters, but that had buried itself in the sand, so we had the

full benefit of sandy, boggy nature untouched. But it was worth it. Yes, worth the expense, and the fatigue, and the heat, and the bumps withal, and my thoughts constantly went to the kind host of a year before, Sir Louis Bols, who had made such a noble effort to get me to Jericho.

To reach the Dead Sea is really an anxious performance, for no reliable road goes there, and one literally bumps over the desert waste, is occasionally caught in a quicksand, and only a native from Jericho is a safe guide to the water's edge, because the sand shifts constantly and every few months the track, if one can call it a track, is different.

Our little Ford did it, after much voluble exchange of views in German with the chauffeur, who, wanting still more money, tried constantly to assure us that it could not be done. An unfortunate Rolls Royce, which, like ourselves, had waited several days for good weather to do the trip, and risked the journey before us, managed to get stuck, as Rolls Royces will, in the sand, and when last we saw the magnificent but unfortunate car it was being pulled out by camels. We heard the occupants had had to spend the night in it before the arrival of the Ships of the Desert could extricate them from their plight.

The water of the lake was as bitter as gall. I tasted it, and wished I had not. A few motley Arabs who came round to have a look at us and the cut-throat-looking " gentleman " we had picked up in Jericho to show us the road, all dipped their hands in the Dead Sea water and bathed their faces. In a few moments they were shining with

dried salt, which, being sacred, was left on until it dropped off. They looked exactly like the frozen eyebrows of ski-men of Norway, where, in winter, white, frozen crystals hang from every hair.

One of the most interesting sights of the day was certainly the view of the sand dunes a few miles off along the Jordan bank. The sand has blown for thousands, aye, millions of years, until it forms mountains, which the wind in turn blows the top off until they are all flat.

Crossing the bridge across the Jordan was a large caravan, on its way back to Mesopotamia, but a short distance off. These caravans of the desert are wonderful. The slow, silently-trudging camels, nose to tail, plodding along in single file, with their embroidered saddle bags; "the mount of merchandise," often carpets or figs; the Bedouins, either walking beside them or occasionally perched on the top of the " warehouse " on the poor beasts' backs, are all just as they were in Bible days, for things move slowly in the East and Middle East. In fact, all Arab countries seem to be just a page turned back at least a thousand years. Hence their picturesque charm.

Palestine, once bursting with miraculous fires (which modern knowledge may interpret by the ignition of petroleum); with water in which no man can sink, such as the Dead Sea (which is so full of salt that hardly anything can live in its waters)—this Palestine slipped backwards for five or six hundred years. The small population was Eastern, and Eastern blood does not bustle. Give

it enough oranges, bananas, tomatoes, maize and rice, and it is content. Palestine was outwardly content, the old religious wars devastated its mountains, valleys and river beds no more. Every religion planted itself upon the soil in some sort of convent, monastery, synagogue, hostel or church. Religions quarrelled among themselves. This religiously historical land showed by sect-feuds how irreligious a land could be. Blood was spilt before the very altars of the Nativity, and in the Holy Sepulchre. Pilgrims came, and pilgrims went; but Palestine still slumbered gently. True, the Turks overran the land and took away much wealth, but it waited for the British, with their enterprise and vim, their justice and money, to open up the country and establish good laws and settled order. As you and I have already seen, Palestine loved the British sway, and preferred to have all her squabbles tried by an English officer (often a mere boy) rather than by her own so-called judges. That is a fact I can vouch for in 1919.

Palestine may be made a great agricultural country. It may become a key to the expansion of the East, as well as the high road from Persia, Northern India and Baluchistan to the West; across the plains of Sharon the wealth of the East may pour westward, while manufactures of the West may return to the sun-lit agricultural lands of the East—through Palestine.

But above all, one must always look on Palestine as a great religious historical monument. As such it will always remain. There are people, and

wise people, who say an international Power (maybe the League of Nations, which has neither guns nor men, but is slowly growing in power and good-will) should take over the guardianship of all these great historical places and Holy Shrines, which truly belong to the entire world. Personally I believe the control of these religions and churches and shrines should be vested in something outside the actual Government. The creation of an international and inter-religious Council, having for president a non-Christian belonging to the Mandatory Power, might make the management of these matters an easy one. But the populace should be allowed to choose their own government, and find their own salvation.

Let it be clearly understood that the British aim is not the ownership of Palestine, although responsible as Mandatory Power for its administration and good government. Britain, happily, is understood and appreciated by the bulk of the people for whose freedom she shed her blood, as testified by sixteen thousand British graves. Britain, moreover, is a Moslem as well as a Christian Power, and the third religion should not be entrusted with the rulership of the other two.

" The Allies have never intended," said General Bols, when Chief Administrator, " and do not intend, to create a Jewish Government in the country. This will be administered by its own people, and according to laws enacted by a council elected by the majority of the nation."

Although all Mohammedans do not agree religiously, they all combine politically against the

Jewish immigration. One of the most important points in favour of immigration is, of course, the smallness of the population. There are less than a million inhabitants, and *the land* could support a couple of million more workers. Palestine is purely an agricultural country. The Jews are not an agricultural race; those imported already are many of them Bolshevists, and more may go. Look out for Socialistic Zionists.

Jew cannot govern Mohammedan, and Mohammedan cannot govern Jew. To avoid schism and strife the government of the Mandatory Power must be strong, and in order to settle Palestine on a firm basis, its continuance in power must be a fixture for a long period. (Irak accepted twenty years' mandate under Britain, October, 1922.) For, should one or other section, or race, of the future population gain the upper hand, it will be to the detriment of the others. Moreover, it is always important to remember that the Jew is highly unpopular with the Arab, and that the perennial quarrels between Arab and Jew are at present a thorny question for any Government charged with the care of this racially mixed population.

An open-minded umpire—not a religious section—must always be at the head of affairs if real prosperity is to be established, but I can only repeat from personal observation that the sooner Great Britain clears out the better, and also from Irak.

One of the most important places in the country is Haifa, with old historical Acca across the Bay.

Palestine under Civil Rule, and its Future

My first visit to Haifa, in the north, was as the guest of Colonel E. A. Stanton, formerly well known in Khartoum and also as Military Secretary on the Duke of Connaught's staff in Canada.

Colonel Stanton was as enthusiastic as General Bols on the future of Palestine, and certainly, in those days of military rule, an enormous amount of work was being accomplished for the good and expansion of the country in every way, much of which quickly bore fruit, such as the wonderful railway system. But another of their particular hobbies was Haifa Harbour.

Now from Haifa to Acca across the Bay is, if I remember, ten miles, so that, if a mole was run out from the point under Mount Carmel, that harbour would be big enough to shelter the entire fleets of the world. It would probably cost four or five millions to build the moles and breakwaters, but the return should be considerable, for the largest ships could enter it at any time and so link up the trade of East and West.

It is already a great natural bay, with deep water and good shores, but up to the present the difficulty lies in the roughness of the water, which is often so turbulent that ships cannot land their cargoes or their passengers. This used to be the case at Vera Cruz in Mexico, but I stood upon that pier shortly after the harbour works were completed, with a raging gale outside, and the water inside as calm as the water in a wash-basin. Some day this may be the same in Acca Bay.

Anyway, the Haifa works were in contemplation under the military rule, and it was then

considered that Haifa could become a great port, capable of vast expansion, likely to outshine any of the ports on the eastern or southern shores of the Mediterranean.

The great irrigation scheme started by General Bols had also considerably advanced. The water power available in the Litani, the Jordan and the Jarmuk was still waiting to be harnessed for the port of Haifa; but plans were progressing for the Jordan Valley, which two thousand years ago was a garden from end to end. There is no garden about it now, but it is quite possible, with its tropical temperature, that if the irrigation was properly run, gardening work might be found for half a million or more people, especially if the rumour that coal, oil, bitumen and sulphur can be found there is true. With water the land from Gaza to Beersheba, which till now has been derelict, may be cultivated; indeed, if the water question is properly settled, much of this land can be turned into corn and barley. Water is the most important question for future agricultural development in a land eminently meant for agriculture. But America need not try to flood the country with steam ploughs, because steam ploughs cannot work between huge rocky boulders, so it seems likely the picturesque old plough of the Bible will hold sway. Adaptability to circumstances, as usual.

One raves about the Bay of Naples and Rio, but the Bay of Haifa takes a deal of beating. The view from half-way up Mount Carmel is extraordinarily beautiful. The wonderful colouring of

the sea, the lights and shadows on the Lebanon hills opposite, behind which lies Beyrout in Syria; the silver streak of sand that surrounds the Bay, and opposite the little white town of Acca (saintly Joan of Arc), which was so well known in the days of the Crusaders.

Before turning my back on Haifa I must again reiterate my thanks to my various hosts during a couple of delightful visits. The first one was Colonel E. A. Stanton; the second, Father Lamb, a cultured and charming priest; the third, Colonel Holmes, whose name has been mentioned before in connection with the railways; and the fourth, Miss Frances Newton, one of the most remarkable women in Palestine. Clever, well-read, hard-working, enthusiastic, with a great desire to bring about peace in the land of her adoption, Miss Newton is a feature of Haifa and Mount Carmel.

Talking of Mount Carmel, it promises to become a great health resort for the East. There is open sea on both sides of the promontory, as many soldiers can verify, who lived during the war in tents at the top. There is already talk of a big hotel, and certainly, with these wonderful views on all sides and the height of the little mountain, Mount Carmel should become a great summer sanatorium for people from Egypt and the Sudan who cannot afford to travel so far as England.

In the meantime, Mount Carmel is little but wilderness. Scrub, wild anemones everywhere, in spring a veritable garden of narcissi and other flowers, but there are a good many old olive trees, which the natives fairly beat in the late autumn

to dislodge the little black fruit which literally carpets the ground below before the olives are picked up and borne away for preservation.

According to the old saw :

> A woman . . . and an olive tree,
> The more you beat them the better they be.

Certainly the trees get beaten, if not the woman.

After eulogizing Haifa and its beauties one must, in common fairness, say that the want of hotel accommodation is quite deplorable. Its lack makes a great strain upon the few British homes which are good enough to shelter travellers with recommendations rather than allow them to spend nights amid the horrors of the Haifa " pubs."

One of the most curious things about Mount Carmel is the fact that it is not only a place of pilgrimage for Roman Catholics, but it is also a place of pilgrimage for Mohammedans. Elijah is the prophet of the little children of both these religions. Numbers of Catholics from all over the world visit Mount Carmel. There is a large hostel for these pilgrims, where hundreds can be accommodated according to their means, in first, second or third class quarters, and if they are very poor they need pay nothing.

We naturally paid, and thoroughly enjoyed the monks' fare that was sent through to us, although it never contained any meat whatever, and was chiefly composed of a variety of vegetables, grains and beans, plainly and well cooked with an unsparing amount of oil ; but as it was good, fresh olive oil it was delicious, as all things are when they

are good of their kind and properly applied. Being women we could not feed in the monks' refectory, and, in any case, there were not many of these students there, because when the Great War came the Turks gave them exactly five hours to clear out. With all their most sacred belongings and precious books they fled to the different countries from which they came, and all had not returned, even on my second visit to Palestine.

The Turks left their marks in many ways, especially by stabbing some of the most precious pictures upon the walls.

Reconstruction is as important after war as destruction appears to be during hostilities.

We were lucky enough to see a small Mohammedan pilgrimage. It was composed of only about two hundred people, but it was largely a procession of camels, and on some of those camels a sort of board was swung; one might say a dining-room table without any legs was placed on the top of the camel's back. On this an entire family reposed. There were bunches of people: the mother and the new baby, the grandmother and all the other small children. Papa probably led the camel, and a grown-up son whacked it from behind; but this curious procession, in all the gorgeous colours of the East, with their flaming orange and red and blue clothes, their ivory beads, their brass bangles, their silver chains, was something most picturesque to look upon. All this was a pilgrimage that had come from far away, from the borders of Mesopotamia, and had taken weeks to travel, so that the Mohammedan children

might be blessed by the Carmelite Roman Catholic monks. More strange still, these people of the Islam faith generally left a small offering behind. If they had only a lemon or an orange, or an ounce of butter, or a bit of fur, or a farthing, or indeed only a bead, they put it on the altar on which the famous carved figure of Elijah stands in the little grotto, above which the modern and somewhat ugly church of the Carmelite monks has been erected.

Half-way down the mountain side is another weird grotto of the same kind, and near by is a sort of barrack-looking building, in which these Mohammedan pilgrims live during the time of their stay. So important are these pilgrimages that Father Lamb told us at the big one in July it was no uncommon thing for ten thousand people to come there at one time, many of them arriving from far beyond Bagdad, but one and all believing in the efficacy of the blessing of the Roman Catholic priest, whose sect has been in Palestine for so many hundreds of years.

There is much discussion whether the Carmelites or the Franciscans who reign in Jerusalem were the earlier settlers in Palestine.

Mount Carmel is known for its Catholic faith, but it is also known to another religious sect, because it was for many years the home of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas, who died in 1921 at the age of seventy-five. He was the head, or Messiah, of the religion of that name, of which most of the followers live in America. It is said to embrace all existing religions, and, decrees that all religions

are acceptable in the eyes of the Almighty. Its great tenet is that all must live at peace.

This man was originally exiled from Persia and came to Acca, where he was not allowed to go beyond the city walls. On the accession to power of the Young Turks, however, in 1908, Abdul Baha was allowed to go across the bay and live in the rich and more important town of Haifa. There, nestling on the hillside below the Monastery of Mount Carmel, is a yellow building. This was the sepulchre of the Baha religion, and there yearly a small number of American followers pilgrimaged to meet this great man. His power was considerable and his knowledge of foreign languages practically nil, but at the same time, in certain places his religion became the fashion and took fast hold of the people.

After his death there was much controversy between his nearest relations, as in the case of Mrs. Eddy and the Christian Scientists in Boston, as to who was to be his successor. The result I know not, but as his individuality was probably the mainstay of the religion, it is quite possible that little more may be heard of the Bahas. In the meantime the sect had made a considerable mark for such a short number of years.

To sum up Palestine quickly :

1. We should clear out.

2. The people of the country—the Arabs—should be left to govern themselves. If they fail, it will be their own fault, and not ours.

3. That we should give our aid only when specifically asked for.

4. That the Jews certainly should have a national home if they want one, but they must not plant themselves on somebody else. And they must govern their new home themselves and pay for it themselves.

5. That the " Holy Land " is so holy to many religions that all the holy places should be entirely outside the Government's jurisdiction. They should be treated separately, either by the moral suasion of the League of Nations, or the creation of an international and inter-religious council.

6. An alien, although allied, protector of the Church is not possible.

There ! Life is a " pie-jaw," as the boys say. Parents lecture children. Wise people lecture themselves, and I have dared to lecture you.

CHAPTER XV

TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED MILES UP THE WHITE NILE

AT a curious little wood station on the Upper Nile, 2,500 miles from the sea, a market was being held. The market consisted of thirty or forty Sudanese women squatting about on the sand, selling one, two, or three eggs for a halfpenny; one chicken for fourpence, or three chickens for tenpence; two or three bananas in a little bunch nestling on the sand for about a farthing; or ditto tomatoes. But the sales were more often done by barter than by actual coin.

A British Civil Servant of the Sudan kindly explained many weird things to us, and as we noticed one of the women had a curious bracelet, we asked him what it really was. He accordingly conversed with this very black lady, who said that it was made of the bones of a fish. Whereupon he told her that he would give a her small diamond set in a ring I was wearing in exchange for her bracelet.

"Oh, no, no!" she cried in an agony. "I do not want that piece of glass," at the same time covering the fish vertebræ with her blue rags to

protect them in case he wished to take her precious charm from her.

"What would *you* have done," I asked, "had she accepted?"

"Run away," he replied, laughing. "But it just shows you how little these women know the value of things when she considered your diamond ring of less value than her fish bones, more of which she could get out of the Nile any day."

At another of these little wood stations (it must be remembered that only wood is burned on the steamers, which are really Government post boats that pass up and down once a month when there is enough water) the Sheikh, or Chief, had been killed by a lion a short time before. This mighty man had been indiscreet enough to wander alone just outside the village at dusk. A lion came prowling, killed him, and carried off the best part of the Sheikh. You and I will not wander forth alone in these parts, my friend. To say the least of it, it would be indiscreet.

But because the natives had killed the lion in revenge, they were quite cheery about it.

Their method of accomplishing their "revenge" was to collect about forty men from that village and another, and put a bait one night of a live animal tied to a stick near the same spot where the tragedy had occurred. Armed with their spears, which they never move without, they waited in the low grass until the lion's return. He did not return for several days, for he was not hungry. But when he did come back, the men, with their long, thin legs, were ready to crawl over

the sand and through the scrub until they surrounded the ferocious beast of the East, and all spears were rushed on him simultaneously from every side until he lay riddled to death.

This sort of hunting takes a bit of pluck, but these men do not lack pluck. They live in constant dread of the wild beasts, one of the most dangerous being the leopard, by which they are surrounded, and every man is, by nature, a hunter.

Their little straw huts, called Tukls—which look like round miniature cornstacks—seem mighty insecure. The tiny door appears almost inviting to the beasts, but at night the natives pull a piece of tree-trunk or hoarding—if rich enough to have such a thing—across the small aperture, and fix it in such a way that if a wild animal should come, the more he batters at the leaning door the more the animal fails to get in, for he only closes the barricade more securely, until the warriors themselves are on their feet and ready to grope out with their spears and kill their furred adversary. Life is in constant danger in these lands.

Many of the Tukls are surrounded by a fence of sugar cane, bamboo, or whatever there happens to grow, so that the family's tame animals at night are driven inside the little coral or zereba. When wild beasts are known to be in the neighbourhood camp fires are kept lighted all night, so that every village one enters has its little puddles of ash, such as one sees where gipsies have been camping by the wayside or on the commons of the British Isles. And the ash has its use, too. The

well-oiled blacks often cover themselves completely with this white ash to keep away mosquitoes, and it has another use. When hunting, the grey, crawling man is less easily discernible on the sand than a black one. They look most quaint, these silvery-shiny Sudanese in the sunlight, and sometimes ash-smear themselves for weddings, or devil dances, or other incantation ceremonies.

The people of these Dinka tribes are enormously tall. Some of the men seemed nearly seven feet high. They are lazy, probably because their wants are so small, but they are fierce fighters. The men were most picturesque south of Fashoda. They wore little or nothing in the way of clothing, but decorated themselves with wonderful brass armlets and anklets, necklaces of wild animals' teeth, bits of fur, often of monkey, and bright parrot feathers in their hair. They carried shields, ordinary spears of every kind, eight feet or nine feet long, throwing spears, and sometimes bows and arrows.

The women do all the work, and a miserable lot they looked. They not only cook and fetch water on their heads twice daily like Rebecca, but they sow and reap, and do all the hard tasks. The Dinka women only wear a girdle of beads for a covering, but the ordinary Sudanese woman is charmingly draped in blue or white and has a graceful gait. On the other hand the Berberin women (whose men are generally house servants) are a dirty lot, and their straggling, bluey-green robes are generally inches too long, and kick up a dust wherever they walk across the dry, sandy soil.

At the end of 1919 these Dinkas gave us much trouble. A thousand spearmen attacked a Government post. They crawled through the grass and over the sand and attacked at night. Our losses were considerable. Little episodes of such a kind are always possible in any of the outposts of our Empire.

Another tribe that fascinated us was the Shelluks. We were lucky enough to see a Shelluk wedding near Fashoda, once the scene of much turmoil between the French and the English, and still so unsavoury a name in these parts that it has been re-christened Kodok.

The man buys his bride. His wealth lies in cattle—one or a hundred—and it is, therefore, by cattle the woman is purchased. She is bought and sold as a chattel, and used as a servant.

This particular dark-skinned lady we had shipped on board at a wood station twenty-four hours before. She had been greatly guarded, surrounded by mats and rugs, and was completely excluded from intruding gaze. When we arrived at her destination to pick up camels and drop three hundred donkeys overboard for Abyssinia near by, the shiny, well-oiled girl was securely wrapped up in a sheet. Four stalwart villagers came aboard. They picked up their bundle, which looked exactly like a large canvas bag of family washing, and off they bore the bride to the home of her mother-in-law-to-be.

The bride squeaked, and out came a pair of patent-leather shoes that wagged vigorously in that scorching sun. In accordance with Shelluk

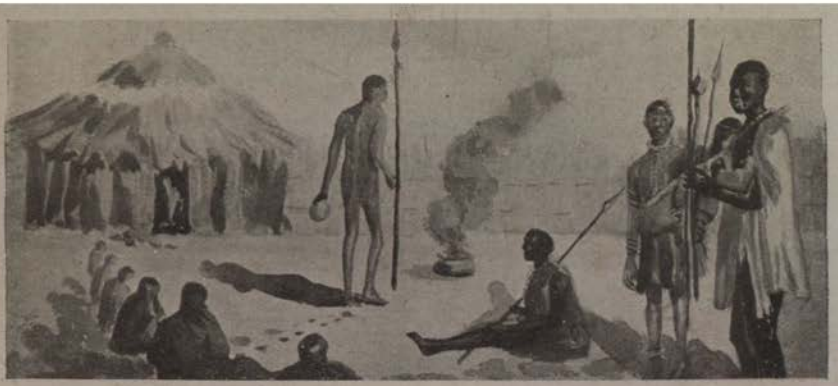
etiquette, she was protesting. It is part of the game to protest, and as the wedding was a three-days' affair, the girl had to protest for some seventy hours, poor soul.

Moved by desire to know what was going to happen next, we followed the incongruous and ridiculous kicking shoes, having asked if we might do so, because it never does to offend people's feelings even if they are coal-black Central Africans.

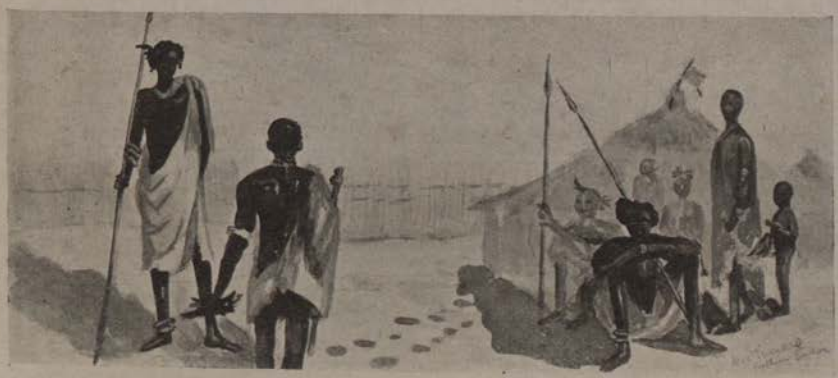
"Yes, the white women might come." So we followed behind this strange procession, amidst shrieks, yells and other weird noises to the accompaniment of *tom-toms*. These *tom-toms* (or drums), of every shape and form, strangely resembled the Indian peoples', and the sounds were quite as discordant as at a great Hindoo *banya* in Central India, or a Mohammedan fête in the Punjab.

Inside the zereba, which enclosed three or four Tukls, the female wedding party had assembled. The bride had been deposited and unwrapped within a straw hut about the size of a bathing-machine. There she sat on her haunches with at least a dozen strange women crowded round her. We could neither see nor breathe inside. Outside the bride's zereba were the warriors with their chignons. Wondrous head-dressing is the Shelluk male's chief joy. These chignons are so large and so stiff they look like sailor hats clapped on the side of the head, or a pair of cow-horns above one ear, but they are securely made of hair and mud and dung.

I tried hard to get some sketches of these weird and interesting people, but they are shy of strangers.



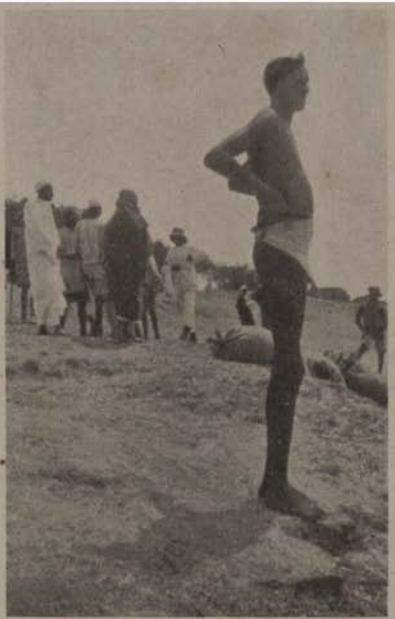
The Ash Wedding Dance In possession of Mrs. Chalmers.



2,500 miles up the Nile, beyond Fashoda. Sudan Dinkas, Shelluks, Sennusi, and other tribes. From sketches by Mrs Alec-Tweedie. In possession of H.E. The Sirdar.

[*To face p.* 260.

Shelluks.



Seven feet high.

Dinka.

2,500 miles up the Nile. From photos by the Author.

They would rather face a wild animal than a tame white woman. Of a camera they have a perfect horror. To them it is the devil's box.

These tribes of Dinkas, Shelluks, etc., have Fear for their religion. They fear evil spirits, they applaud good omens, they adore charms, and wear their necklaces of plaited hairs from the elephant's tail, or fur from wild animals, partly from superstition and partly for adornment. The witch-doctors play a great part in their lives, while the monthly visit of the Government boat is the one great excitement of the village and its only means of making money. But, alas and alack, they brew an awful concoction and love getting drunk.

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In my opinion, owing to the many days' travelling and the enormous expense from Assouan to Khartoum, it is not worth going to Khartoum alone, although both the ship and the train are excellent.

Neither is Khartoum itself worth a visit. The accommodation is so uncomfortable, the town so modern, and there is so little left of the real old Omdurman. This does not mean that Khartoum and Omdurman are devoid of interest; but the traveller has to weigh the pros and cons in the scale of travel, and what is worth doing for ten pounds is not worth doing for one hundred pounds, nor wasting the time over.

One can live on a barge, or sleep in a tent and be happy; one can rest for the night even on a

deck chair; but one cannot stand a pretentious-looking bedroom and bugs walking down the walls. Five I killed in one night in an hotel in Palestine. That is the sort of thing people will not stand. These dirty, ill-kept, vermin-ridden hotels that bespatter the Middle East and Sudan must be voluntarily burned down—nothing else will cleanse them—and when rebuilt, they must be kept clean and sweet, however simple they may be.

Fancy paying twenty-five shillings a day to be devoured by bugs. It is preposterous.

Omdurman was rather a disappointment. One somehow associates it with weird barbaric ways, but there are really two Omdurmans to-day; the remnant of the weird, barbaric element of Kitchener's days in the market places, which are merely bits of tents, or rags on poles to protect the inhabitants from the glaring sun of the African desert. Beneath these queer rags and oddments with all their artistic charm, vendors are selling coffee or tusks, or cotton, or crocodile skins, or tomatoes or bright orange gourds, as chance may be. That part of it is very artistic, but the so-called modern town is cheap and nasty. Horrid little one-storied, mud-brick houses, neither ancient nor modern, thoroughly inartistic, with most of their windows iron-barred so that the women shall not slip out, or thieves slip in. Such is the modern Omdurman of to-day, and one cannot say much more from the tourist's point of view of Khartoum.

Khartoum is a thoroughly modern town, with one or two handsome new public buildings, with

wide streets, well-planted with trees on either side, and a whole district of good European bungalows, inhabited by officials and civilians; but there is honestly nothing whatever to see in Khartoum, and its interest lies more in its name and its past than in its present. The Palace wherein the Sirdar (General Sir Lee Stacke) now lives, is where Gordon was killed: and the garden is lovely.

Of course there is the Gordon College, and I am villain enough to say that I entirely disapprove of such colleges. One finds them scattered all over the Middle East and in India, and the amount of mischief they do, to my mind, is incalculable. It is no good taking a little boy from the wilds, where he is brought up in the simplicity of his native home, and dumping him into a college where he is educated free in a number of things that his brain is quite incapable of grasping, except like a parrot, and then sending him back to his country life, for which he has become utterly unfitted, and the socialistic germ engendered in the small boy's brain grows into rebellion, discontent and far-reaching evil.

Education is a matter of generations. There are exceptions. People may come from the gutter and educate themselves to reach the highest positions possible, but they are the exceptions. The one in ten thousand, aye, in a hundred thousand. Promiscuously to pick up little urchins from country villages, and try and inculcate university teaching into their brains which have lain fallow for generations, hardly ever works out well; in fact, it was shocking, on such a tour as I went,

to see the number of these parrot-like educated natives in many lands, who have the traditions of the wilds behind them, who have not assimilated in any way the education of the West in its real sense, who have merely learned a lot of stuff by rote and are quite incapable of thinking for themselves or making any practical use of their knowledge afterwards.

The saddest thing of all is the fact that no native ever trusts another native. It does not matter whether it is in Egypt or the Sudan, Palestine or India, Nubia or Syria, each country is distrustful of its own people. Bribery is so rife that it exists even among themselves. They know it and own it. That is why they so esteem the white man, not only as a ruler or a judge, but as an individual, because, whatever his sins, they feel he can be trusted.

Ye Gods! is it not terrible to think that this wonderful admiration of the young men who have been sent out by Great Britain to the farthest corners of the earth should be lost? That our Parliamentarians and diplomats should promise one thing and do another? For truly to-day the prestige of Great Britain is trembling in the balance.

That great rock of propaganda, *The Times*, constantly made mistakes. Back in the hands of the Walters it should again become impeccable. Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Balfour have promised many things, and then found them too difficult to fulfil. I do not mean this unkindly, but I do firmly believe that

the people on the spot, who really understand the situations in which they live, should be allowed to guide the Powers at home, and once a plan has been drawn up, or a mandate given, nothing should be allowed to alter it. No rash, hurried promises should ever be made. When decisions have been made after due consideration and the best possible advice received from local men and women, then, and not till then, should anything pass into law.

Vacillation spells ruin in every department, just as procrastination pulls the world backwards.

No wonder President Roosevelt once said to me (it was after his game-hunting expedition across Africa):

"Your Public School boys have made your Empire. I am going back to the States to try and rear that class of self-reliant, justice-loving young sportsman."

One is proud, indeed, to see these British sons living alone in the wilds. These Varsity Blues, now civil servants in Uganda and the Sudan, administering justice and loved and respected by the people they rule. One of my hosts was the well-known oarsman, E. R. Burgess. Another fellow traveller was B. A. Mackenzie of Uganda, for on those Government boats on the White Nile Government servants or big game hunters are the chief passengers.

Never shall I forget my experiences of Omdurman, and I'm glad, friendly reader, you were not there to laugh at me.

The Sirdar kindly lent my sister and myself his launch at six o'clock in the morning, so that we might leave Khartoum in good time before the

sun was high. It was an interesting run past the old points of war in Lord Kitchener's day, and, on arriving on the shore at Omdurman, we found a couple of donkeys waiting for us.

Civilized donkeys have saddles and stirrups, uncivilized donkeys have rugs across their backs, and less civilized donkeys have neither rugs nor stirrups. This is all very well for people who are accustomed to ride without stirrups, but it is exceedingly uncomfortable to have one's legs dangling far down on either side until cramp, and pins and needles, and all sorts of unwelcome pains attack one in the thigh, the calf, or the foot. If one had only known beforehand, a piece of rope taken with us could have been slung across the donkey's back, and easily used to avoid dangling legs and other discomforts; but we did not know that the Omdurman donkey was nude.

The two Omdurman mokes were handsome beasts and kindly, and they happened to be rather tall. There was no possible stone, hill or knoll on the sandy shore from which to mount, and although, after sundry struggles, my sister, being younger and more agile than myself (or shall we say thinner?) managed to climb into her seat, my donkey pirouetted round and round and I pirouetted beside him.

The sun was up. It grew hotter every minute. I was growing more and more heated, more and more uncomfortable, and more and more furious. It was exasperating to think that a wretched Sudanese donkey could baffle me, who had been accustomed to ride any sort of beast from an

early age, but round he went; and round I went, and hotter became the sun as the time flew by.

It really seemed as if the donkey were going to win the game, when, with one furious last jump, I managed to throw my whole body across his back and somehow scrambled my right leg over his body.

Once there, I determined to remain, and the two sketches I made of the Walls of Omdurman and the Mahdi's Tomb were actually made sitting on that wretched donkey's back, for I dare not get down lest I should never get up again.

Kitchener destroyed the Mahdi's Tomb in one of his battles; but that did not destroy the spirit of the Mohammedan. A little bunch of eight or ten men were prostrated before the demolished tomb. They slunk away when we arrived, but no doubt returned as soon as we had left.

Though the modern town of Omdurman is hideous, the old market walls and sheds of this, the greatest ivory market of the world—for it is quite close to the ivory country—are still queer, weird and picturesque. Ivory beads, which one sees in thousands as necklaces, were being turned out at every corner, and whereas real ones were being sold in Omdurman at one pound and twenty-five shillings the string, the real ones were being sold in London for five pounds and six pounds a piece. Most of the so-called "real" ones, however, were not real at all, but interspersed with bone, containing a real bead now and then.

But for anyone who can afford the money and the time to go further south than Khartoum,

the southern Sudan is most interesting. It is a revelation of wild beast and bird life, the big-game hunter's elysium. Verily, it is a natural zoological gardens.

During the War no wild animals had been killed, and, therefore, there was an accumulation and increase of its own accord. This meant that the Nile borderland was the most wonderful aviary and the most wonderful aquatic preserve imaginable.

There were monkeys in thousands. We counted crocodiles in hundreds, too, till we could count no more. Very different from the Ganges with its paucity. We counted hippopotami until they became tedious. We heard jackals galore and the cry of the hyena, but most striking were the variety of storks and pelicans along the river bank. They could be counted in hundreds, and at Marabout Island the ship's whistle made the birds rise in thousands—yes, thousands—till they looked like a veritable black cloud. One could not believe that this was simply bird life, but momentarily expected a great thunder-clap from such dark, heavy, hanging clouds—clouds of gathering birds gently crossing the heavens in their flight.

The Sudan will ever be present in the cold of the winter in my mind for the rest of my life, not because the Sudan is cold; far from it; it is hot and a little hotter, but cold never—although windy.

The "reminder" will be the cosy warmth of a leopard-skin coat. The Sudanese leopards are very fine. They are also large, but it takes about six

of them to make a long coat, because it is necessary to take the backs only to make a good job, and, therefore the coat when finished is composed chiefly of the backs of six fine leopards. The white under part of the beast does nicely for trimmings, but it is so different in colour to the small dotted black spine that the two do not work well together into one garment. I simply love my Sudanese leopard-skin coat.

Another speciality of the Sudan, but unfortunately useless up to now, is the Sud.

Somehow I seem often to have heard of the Sud, but I had not the slightest idea what the Sud really meant.

It is enormously high grass growing straight out of the water, the sort of papyrus on which the ancient Egyptians wrote their books. It has a pink, feathery flower. It often rises ten or twelve or even fifteen feet. It covers two hundred and fifty by three hundred and fifty miles of marshy land, if memory does not fail me, and is so thick and matted together that it is only possible for a steamer to push its way through the channels which are more or less kept open as waterways, and if a boat has not been through for a few weeks—a thing that often happens—it is a case of absolutely forcing the bow of the flat-bottomed barge through this tangled mass of vegetation.

All sorts of suggestions have been made for utilizing the Sud, through which every steamer has to plod for five days and five nights to reach Rejaf. Being a sort of bamboo by nature, people thought the grass could be pulped and made into

paper, but up to now this has not proved possible, there being too much water in the stalks and branches to make it of marketable value.

Many hundreds of thousands of acres of Sud may some day be utilized, but in the meantime it is a hindrance to mankind, and nothing more.

It so happened that our ship was joined in the Sud by Sir Philip Brocklehurst, back from a big game expedition, and his brother, who was met by his wife, Lady Helen Brocklehurst, the daughter of the Countess of Airlie. A strange meeting-place, but we left our south-bound barge and these two hunter-men greeted us on their north-bound one, so we all travelled back to Khartoum together. A week later we were joined by the Zoological Society's boat from Cairo. This was tied to our ship's side and we escorted lions and leopards and birds and reptiles and specimens of monkeys along the waters of the Nile for many days, with all their respective keepers and live food.

Forsooth one experience followed another. Life was never dull on either Nile.

Little did I realize, speaking so often of "the Nile," that the Nile only runs from Khartoum and Omdurman to the sea, and that where Omdurman and Khartoum sit on either side of the river it is not one river, but two rivers, for at this point the Blue and White Niles wed. At this point Gordon sat under a tree that is still standing, waiting for the relief that never came.

And very different they are, for the waters of the Blue Nile come down from Nubia and Abyssinia, and those of the White Nile from the

Victoria and Albert Nyanzas. They are of a totally different colour, the speed is a totally different pace, and after the two flowing rivers join, it is really a mile or two before they become thoroughly merged; in fact, it is quite extraordinary from a steamer to see the blue water running on one side, and the white, muddy stream on the other.

It is near here that the vast Gebel Aulia Dam is about to be built. It was then under way in the spring of 1921, but all work was suddenly stopped owing to political troubles with Egypt.

When will it be resumed ?

Khartoum, 1,600 miles south of Cairo, was founded in 1823 by Mehemet Ali. Gordon defended it against the Mahdi in 1884, and he was slain on the 26th January, 1885, before the arrival of the rescuing army.

Omdurman then came to the fore, and was ruled by the Mahdi, after whose death the Khalifa succeeded until Kitchener's occupation in 1898.

The day we arrived back at Khartoum from practically Central Africa, with all its wild romance and wonderful impressions, we found upon the table a large and beautiful white envelope, containing a large and beautiful royal card of invitation to the large and beautiful garden party which His Excellency the Sirdar, General Sir Lee Stacke and Lady Stacke, were holding the following day in the Palace Grounds to meet Lord Allenby, High Commissioner of Egypt and the Sudan, who had just arrived on his yearly inspection.

The most magnificent part of the whole garden party was the military escort. No one could fail to be amazed by the splendour, both in height and build, to say nothing of the carriage, of those native Sudanese regiments. They are quite show people, and, of course, dressed in all their best bibs and tuckers for such a great function; they were extra shiny and polished.

It was a very interesting party. Hardly a single man wore civilian clothes, although most of the uniforms were white with the badges of the regiments, or civil service departments, upon shoulders and caps.

As the afternoon wore on, the sun began to wane. Up to that moment some of the greatest sheikhs of the Sudan had been participating in the garden party; but as these good gentlemen were all Mohammedans, no party could keep them away from their prayers at sundown, and accordingly off they went in little groups of twos or threes or fives, or even singly, to bow their heads, prostrate their foreheads upon the ground and say their prayers to Allah. They all did.

The Palace Garden is about the same size as Buckingham Palace Garden, but instead of containing six thousand people, a not uncommon number at one of the garden parties given by our King and Queen, it probably sheltered about six hundred guests; but imagine a large percentage of those people disappearing into corners to say their prayers in the middle of the function. It really was the most extraordinary mixture of East and West.

When they had finished their prostrations, these splendid looking men rose up, slipped on their shoes again, and rejoined us at the party.

One particularly interesting little group, of which I managed to make a small sketch, was composed of five men in beautiful red and purple robes. The trees on either side of them formed a natural bower over their heads, and through the archway was a bed containing a large number of wild-rose trees. They were very wild, just the ordinary five-petal rose, but thereby hangs a tale.

General Gordon, when he was Sirdar, was particularly fond of his garden. He imported the most beautiful specimen roses from England. He tended them himself with water from the Nile, but after he was killed at the top of the steps of the Palace, the roses perhaps did not receive quite as much attention under Lord Kitchener or Sir Reginald Wingate. In any case, they grew older, and as age advanced, they reverted from the wondrous scent and size and colour of the special British specimens, to the old wild rose from which they had originally sprung.

Here was a case of evolution, or eugenics, or retrogenics.

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All women who read these pages, may I pour a few words of advice into your ears. (Having said that, every male reader will at once peruse the following little hint.) When you find that your hair is falling out, as mine did sadly after the Sudan with

its terrific heat, if you don't mind turning your locks a hideously dark hue *pro tem.*, rub your scalp with castor oil. It sounds nasty, doesn't it? But it's nastier to find your tresses on which you can sit coming out by the yard, and castor oil is a remedy. To make it a little less obnoxious, to half a teaspoonful of the oil add half a teaspoonful of lavender water or Eau de Cologne, and then rub them vigorously into your scalp for several nights.

After that it will not be necessary to remark that you must have your head washed. Now, male reader, if you like to follow this advice your own hairdresser may cease to remark:

"Getting a little thin on the top, sir."

And you also may bless the castor oil of the Sudan.

CHAPTER XVI

THE GREATEST DAM IN THE WORLD

IN January, 1921, when I saw it, there were six thousand people at work; a few months later that number had been augmented to sixteen thousand, and by the end of the year there were twenty thousand, and even then the job was expected to take five years. Think of it.

And the place?

Tucked right away on the banks of the Blue Nile, about two hundred miles south of Khartoum, on the waters that come down from Abyssinia to Sudan. Its name is Macwar or Sennar.

Those thousands of people were fascinating. They were shaded, from white engineers and overseers—numbering about one hundred and fifty all told—to pale yellow, chocolate, brown, tawny, and finally the jet-black natives of Central Africa, with their woolly heads, wide nostrils and thick lips. Sometimes the workers wore elaborate clothes, sometimes "nothings on"—and no wonder, for the "nothings on" were, anyway, cooler in that terrific heat. Hundreds of them had crossed the Red Sea from Arabia, and others had walked in from Nigeria and the French Congo. It was, indeed, a heterogeneous collection of

humanity and almost all males. Nearly every man wore a knife strapped to his left arm just above the elbow, and nearly every man had a charm on the right arm, often plaited elephant's tail or rhinoceros hairs, holding a very small leather case containing a few lines from the Koran. You would have thought it strange, wouldn't you, to see the men almost naked of clothing, but scarcely ever without their armlet containing a knife? On that knife life often depends. Wild animals abound, and wild animals, when they are angry, will go for anyone or anything that crosses their path. Thus the knife for protection of life, the bit of Holy Writ for protection against evil spirits.

As the Mohammedan drinks verses of the Koran pounded into pulp in water, in order to free himself from the evil spirit, so the Sicilian believes he can swallow a bad or a good spirit. These spirits do not necessarily belong to dead people; sometimes a man is said to "have a devil in him," and, if so, persons who come in contact with him make the Sign of the Cross to prevent themselves from being contaminated. If a man be strange and mysterious in behaviour, people shrug their shoulders and say, "He has a spirit in him." A strong nature is often called *Capurali di li Spirdi*, which means that he is so strong he has the power within himself of keeping evil spirits away.

"I knew somebody," a Sicilian once remarked to me, "who had the power of throwing off the spirits, and when he died, he was so strong that he was able to pass that power on to his wife."

Almost everybody in Sicily appears to believe in spirits, and amongst the lower orders they are a constant dread; in fact, superstition plays an important part every day in the lives of all Sicilians. They live in a world of terror, which the Roman Catholic Church does much to keep alive.

And our poor Sudanese friends live in even worse dread and are always looking out for "signs."

They were pretty wild, those thousands of people, and it showed the good temper, the wise discretion in ministering justice of the Britishers in power that there was not more trouble, for naturally all these races, creeds, colours and inclinations did not mix particularly well. Then, again, there was the food difficulty. What one would eat, another could not touch, and so each tribe had been allotted its own little village, or compound, where they could buy their own particular foods, cook them in their own particular way and live their own particular lives. But human nature is human nature, and when they saw a particularly delectable morsel in another compound, or a dog that looked the sort of dog a certain man wished to acquire, he simply nipped over the wall, or the bamboo hedge, and took possession of the food or the dog. Rows ensued, knives were drawn, and murder was not unheard of.

The markets at this great dam were a most curious sight; a large open space of sand was the market place. A little round mound of sand, or a hole, according to the wares, was the table, and behind the little round mound or hole each vendor

of wares balanced himself on his heels, or sat cross-legged upon his haunches, according to his race. What is more remarkable to a Westerner is the little these people buy at a time. One tomato, value almost nothing, is an ordinary purchase; half a yard of sugar cane, valued at almost nothing also, is another purchase, and that sugar cane peeled a few inches at a time can be sucked for the greater portion of the day. There is no doubt about it, these people's needs are little and their requirements in food small. Therefore, it has been found that the best way to make them into good workmen is to encourage them to be a little ambitious, and once it becomes the fashion in a certain district to wear a white calico shirt, every man wishes to procure a white calico shirt, and he accordingly works hard and saves up his pennies until he can acquire the much-desired article.

Without some such incentive, Southern peoples are idle in the extreme. They seem to have no natural desire for improvement of any sort, and are quite content to laze through the day and do nothing in particular.

Such an enormous work as that at Macwar makes one feel proud to be British. Vast countries, wild, useless continents, taken in hand by young boy civil servants, gradually governed and brought to a state of civilization and prosperity. Great agricultural or mineral schemes linked up by British railways; and England—small, tiny England—is the body whose tentacles have spread out over the world. Canada, Australia, New

Zealand, South Africa—all these dominions are offshoots of that little island, and magnificent in their patriotism. They know by experience the value of English rule, the justice of the English people.

The British are the only great colonists in the world. Why? Because they temper freedom with justice, and they are honest. A handful of agitators have disturbed India and Egypt. German and American money have upset Ireland; but the great Empire stands. The great British peoples are firmly knit together to bring peace, prosperity, justice and true democracy to mankind. They sometimes drop a stitch in the knitting, but they usually pick it up again.

We are the most democratic people in the world.

We are the freest, and yet we have a crown for our jewel, and that is the crown of true royalty. Presidents may be excellent people, but they are never in office long enough to give real service to their country that a Royal Family such as ours can give. Incidentally, I have been in the United States for three different Presidential elections—Mackinley, Roosevelt, Wilson. But it is Royalty that knits the Empire together, and unity is strength. The Sudan is part of our Empire.

It literally took one's breath away to see that vast machinery dumped down on the desert—to see those people running about like bees to a hive—to see those cranes and railway trucks, those great canal cutters. In fact, some of the largest and finest machinery in the world to-day was at work at that far-away spot, including a

complete factory for the manufacture of cement capable of producing 50,000 tons a year. And the result will be, when the dam is finished, that 300,000 acres of land (and eventually when other works have been constructed, 3,000,000 acres), now lying useless, will be brought under cotton cultivation in the Sudan, giving work to thousands of the inhabitants, and producing within the British Empire much-needed raw material for the mills of Lancashire. The cost of the Sennar work is borne by the Sudan Government, and the dam will be 3,300 metres long. That is considerably longer than Assouan, which up to now has been the world's biggest water hold-back. If memory does not fail me, Assouan is a mile and a quarter across, and contains 180 sluices, with a fall of seventy feet of water from the Sudan to Egypt. Macwar-Sennar will be bigger in every way.

I wonder if you have ever been thoroughly frightened? If you had been with me we should have one another's company and, therefore, probably I would not have felt afraid, for you could have held my hand, or I could have held yours. As it was, let me own at once, funk overcame me.

It was at old Sennar: the Sennar which appears so often in Kitchener's history. There is little of the place left; almost nothing, in fact. And yet, when one grovels in the sand, remnants of past days appear.

We had motored over from Macwar (where they are actually at work on the so-called Sennar Dam), and the little party had gone off in search of beads.

Strange, isn't it, to search for beads in the desert hundreds of miles from anywhere ? but nevertheless true. Years ago, Sennar had been a big market. Traders came from Nubia and Abyssinia near by. They crossed the Red Sca from Arabia. They brought treasures often from Persia, and, of course, being Easterns, a large trade was done in beads and ivory from the Congo.

When the town was destroyed, all the houses were levelled to the ground, but naturally a great many things were buried in the sand, and it is almost possible even now to trace the lines of the former streets by the odds and ends that can be excavated within a few inches of the surface.

The pots and pans are of no value as a rule, being sun-baked mud, but occasionally something of worth turns up, and what is always of interest is the fact that half-a-dozen people in an hour or two can collect enough beads to make a necklace. Our little party did so that very afternoon, but I, being on picture bent, sat myself down near the ruin of a little temple on the dear little one-and-elevenpenny camp-stool with my sketch-block upon my knees, a water tin standing up in the sand beside me, and my hideous and much be-chaffed bag of paints and rags on the other side.

I had not been there very long before I heard a horrible chattering. Monkeys, of course, abounded, but somehow this did not sound like monkeys, and as the noise continued and grew louder, I began to feel the loneliness of my position. Sitting beside a small ruin on a sandy stretch along the banks of the Blue Nile, miles from anywhere, was not an

altogether delectable spot, in untoward circumstances, to be left alone.

The chattering got louder and drew nearer, when, lo! one of the most extraordinary spectacles I have ever seen burst upon me. There must have been thirty or forty coal-black women, practically nude. Most of them carried a baby on the lower part of their back slung by a piece of old rag or sack; nearly all of them had baskets, or bundles piled high upon their heads, sometimes held by a hand, but more often kept in place by sheer balance.

They were extraordinarily plain, these Sudanese women. The young ones had the beautiful figures of the East, the older ones were long and lank or hugely fat; shapelessly wallowing in fat; and they were all chattering in whatever language they pertain to chatter, evidently very pleased to be away from their tyrant—man—and making the most of a cheerful afternoon.

When they saw me, they stopped. The most appalling silence befell the scene. They were as much surprised as I was, for it is quite possible they had never seen a white woman before. It is equally possible they had never seen a woman with her clothes on before, and it is certainly more than possible that they had never gazed upon anyone sitting down except on her own haunches, or anyone painting a picture.

So far so good. Having surrounded me in a ring, they then began to jabber at one another. I smiled a sickly smile. I am quite sure it must have been a sickly smile, for I was unable to say

a single word they could understand; and they must have thought the paint box black magic.

Gradually the circle tightened. They came nearer and nearer, and then one of them with a brilliant inspiration, and more exposed adipose tissue than I had ever seen before, stood before me, and, putting her hand out, demanded something. She could hardly be asking for money, as she had probably never seen money. In any case I had none. I shook my head. But that was not to stop her.

Number 2 did the same. Number 3, Number 4, Number 5 all came in turn. I shook my head more and more, but by this time I must own I was beginning to feel frightened, for thirty or forty women in that lone spot could have torn every rag I had from my body and marched off with everything I possessed. It was an ugly moment. No sickly smile seemed to have any effect. No polite bows, no clapping of hands, and beyond that—inspiration did not go.

You see, if you, kind reader, had been beside me, I should have had a companion in this tragic hour, but I was alone and I dare not even Coo-ee; first, because I did not think my European companions would hear the sound; and, secondly, because it might have had a bad effect to show fear. So, smiling still more benignly, I got up and volunteered to shake hands with the lot. This they seemed rather to like, so we all shook hands, and then I very slowly and quietly—feeling anything but quiet inside—began to pack up. This interested them. They all looked at the sketch, which, by

the way, was an extremely bad one, and I daresay whether it had been upside down or not, it would never have affected them. Finally, when they had looked at me sufficiently, jabbered about something incessantly, pointed to their mouths to notify what they wanted was really food, which, alas! I could not supply, they took themselves off in quite a friendly spirit, and my knees ceased to shake.

One afternoon it was proposed we should go a trip to the land of baboons, so you must jaunt off with me again, this time for a drive. We bumped. We gushed and rushed over forty or fifty miles of sand to Segadi. An occasional monkey crossed our path, a parrot screeched overhead; but the baboons, in which the district abounds, must have heard us coming, for on the way there they did not cross our path. At Segadi we were introduced to the King and Queen, not a live King and Queen, but a wonderful replica of humanity in two stone figures standing high up the mountain side, cut out from the natural granite of the Segadi mountain. Nature carved them. Man's hand has never touched them; but there they are.

Hereby lies a tale. The granite from Assouan was taken by the early Egyptians and Greeks, hundreds—well-nigh thousands—of miles, to build temples in Sudan, Egypt, Palestine, and even far-away Syria; but it was "too far" to bring it a few miles for the building of the Sennar Dam. At Segadi granite also abounds, a wonderful pink stone in colossal blocks; and through the skill of British engineers and Italian workmen, the moun-

tain is being sliced for the building of this great new dam. Over a million tons will be used in the work.

High up the extreme edge of the mountain stand these two extraordinary pillars rising straight into the air, which so closely resemble two human figures. The native Sudanese call them the King and Queen of Segadi; they look upon them with awe, and superstition is rife as to their virtues and their powers. If anything should happen during one of the blastings to those strange shapes, there is no doubt about it that the matter would be serious, for the natives, Mohammedans and queer-religioned Southern Sudanese tribes, one and all believe that they are good spirits, and that if they fell through some untoward blasting of the rock, disaster they aver would befall the place. They were standing solidly when I left them in the early months of 1921.

One legend runs that the two granite pillars were Sheikh Hadari and his wife, who were turned to stone for denying God, and so were their cattle on the plain at the foot of the Segadi hill. These "cattle" are the floating boulders of limestone, which gave the first indications of limestone lying ten feet under the soil. This limestone is now being quarried and used for the manufacture of cement for the building of the dam. It is near Segadi that Henry Wellcome has that remarkable rocky house, and is making excavations, many of his discoveries being now housed in his wonderful museum in Wigmore Street, London.

It seemed an extraordinary thing, practically

in Central Africa, to be asked what one would like for one's lunch.

"Chops and steaks," I replied, laughing at suggesting the impossible.

"You shall have them."

Never was a reply more unexpected. Where on earth could chops and steaks come from in such a place? But they duly appeared, and it was in this wise.

At the head of the contingent of workmen engineers at Segadi was an Italian caterer. These two hundred men had to be fed daily, and they had employed this man at so much per head to feed them in this wild desert.

The Italian caterer accordingly had rigged himself up an extraordinarily simple little hut, surrounded by tent-like structures which were used as his larder, his washing-up house, and general utility store. Every day he killed something, a sheep or a goat, or whatever good fortune brought his way, and as the food had to be eaten within a few hours of being killed, the larder was replenished in the night and emptied soon after mid-day.

Consequently, when we arrived upon the scene, about ten a.m., we were able to order our repast, and a wonderful repast it was, for he wanted to show the English ladies what he could do in the wilds of nowhere.

First of all, we had a dish of tomatoes and macaroni, as only Italians know how to cook them; and then, think of it. Far away from the Strand, or any famous Ritz and Carlton Hotels,

this good man served up a mixed grill on a large dish. There were tiny cutlets (for the sheep never grew very big), there were little kidneys, and all sorts of delectable morsels most beautifully cooked. He had fried and grilled them all with oil, also in Italian fashion, and beautifully grilled they were.

As far as I can remember, he gave us some sort of cheese *soufflé* to follow. How the man made it in that extraordinary place no one knew, but the whole meal was a surprise. The food was better than the chamber in which we enjoyed it, for there was no real table, only a piece of board slung upon two trestles, and we sat on old baskets turned upside down, while funny little dogs ran about all over the place trying to pick up scraps, and chickens that had jumped down from the rafters supporting the tent cackled between our feet.

Out of an aperture which formed the door, we gazed into the most tremendous tropical heat and sun, and in the distance stood the Segadi Mountain, with the famous King and Queen of granite smiling down upon us.

From twelve to three o'clock everyone sleeps. It is too hot to do anything, but once the great heat of the day is past coffee is distributed all round, and people wake up again and start to work.

Our companion was Dr. Carr, from the London Hospital. He and another London Hospital man were looking after the many thousands of people employed at the Sennar Dam.

As the day waned we turned towards home. Over the sand we bumped again, passing thorny

mimosa bushes, giving off a sweet smell, occasionally seeing a hyena or a wild cat, but never, never a single baboon, which, of course, we had naturally been most anxious to see in their native wilds. But they had been blasting at the hill that morning, and when they blast, the baboons scuttle. They are shy beasts. They generally remain away several days, only returning when they are sure all is secure again.

Another day we went by Government launch, with our host Mr. Macrae, to the wonderful forest of Eredeeba. Think of it again. Eighteen months before it was almost virgin forest and unknown, and already twenty miles of light railway, required for the work, penetrated that African jungle. Magnificent were the trees, almost all acacia, locally known as "sunt." The wood is extremely strong, and so heavy that it will not float in water. It was being cut for sleepers. Tens of thousands of sleepers for the railways were being made in that Eredeeba Forest, because very shortly Eredeeba Forest, as such, will cease to exist. It will be part of the great lake which will cover miles of country once the water is dammed and regulated at Macwar-Sennar.

Many of these wonderful trees drop long arms, which settle in the earth, until huge tents or railings are formed that make penetration difficult. The jungle is a wonderful thing, and is almost the same wherever jungle exists. Hundreds of natives were at work, some wearing white chemises, some wearing nothing; and the few women passing through the forest were fine-looking

women, balancing huge baskets or logs upon their heads, usually carrying a baby, perhaps two years old, hanging below the waist behind. I have seen a woman carry two children, one being presumably quite an infant, and the other still too short to walk through the scrub. The babies' heads peeped round like panniers on the lady's thighs.

These Sudanese women never leave their babies, because there is no home to leave them in. They are generally more or less on the wander. They rig up little shelters of twigs and branches and palms and bamboos, knowing perfectly well that not a drop of rain will fall until the right moment, and when it does fall, it will come down in such torrential form, that no hut or any ordinary building would keep it out; so from the moment the rains really begin until they are over, the wretched natives in most countries have to submit to being soaked.

It was far too hot to walk, and the undergrowth was far too stiff to get through, so I must ask you to take a jaunt with me this time on a trolley car, and let us run a dozen miles or more through a tropical forest, where eighteen months before no man had trod.

This little narrow-gauge rail had been made for moving the trees, or rather moving the lathes and rail sleepers, after they had been cut in the forest themselves. The trolley car is worked by the natives, who run on foot, four of them pushing from behind to make it go. Its wheels are so well fitted to the rails, that once the thing is started,

the little seats (for really they are nothing more than seats) run along by themselves; but still it is wonderful how these men, with their bare feet, bare heads and little on their bodies, can run, or trot, by the hour in these tropical lands.

The parrots amused us greatly. They kept up a constant chatter, and monkeys ran across the path just as rabbits do in England, only far more frequently—or they swung themselves from tree to tree quite unconcerned and undisturbed by our presence.

After a while we arrived beside a tropical hut. It was just one of those little wooden huts that are packed up and sent about the world from one place to another to be erected as required, but which are cleverly made with mosquito wire netting outside, so that the owner can sleep in peace, and rest without the constant worry and fear of mosquito bites.

In this little hut lived a retired British officer. He was the head of the Forest Works of Eredeeba, and lived utterly alone in those wilds, but for the two native servants who attended to his wants.

He gave us quite a nice little meal, and when we complimented him on his cooking and asked to see his kitchen:

"Kitchen!" he exclaimed. "It is only a tent, and I would not go inside it for the world. Nothing would ever make me eat another thing if I really knew how it was cooked. I have an idea the process is horrible, and so the best thing is to remain in ignorance."

He was probably right; the natives have their own ways of doing things, and blessed is he that knoweth not too much.

On our return journey by the launch, we called on the Sultan of Myerno. In his way he was a very great gentleman, and, being a very great gentleman, he has many wives. Black though he was, a product of Central Africa, barely educated, not particularly rich except in goods—for money, as a coin, is of little consequence—he had the most wonderful manners, refusing to sit before he had waved for us to do so, and behaving with all the courtesy of a great native gentleman.

Things are not done in a hurry in these countries, and after we had arrived within his mud walls, his retinue began to decorate the place. They brought out carpets, slowly and solemnly laid them upon the floor, they went away for another quarter of an hour—arrived with more rugs, and laid them as solemnly upon the tables. Two long, British chairs, which had been presented to him by the chief engineer of the dam, and which the Sultan owned he preferred to sit in himself, rather than squat on the floor, were carried with great ceremony into the courtyard, and finally—but it took a long time to reach that finality—after the arrival of the dark gentleman himself with his smiles and low bows, finally coffee was brought. It was Abyssinian coffee, for Abyssinia was only a few miles away, but it was made sweet, very sweet, for the sugar also grew near by, and it was served in an English china tea service which was one of the Sultan's greatest possessions.

Our kindly engineer intimated that we English women would like to see his wives. The Sultan was all smiles. He sent a servant—a eunuch—to tell them, and it was quite extraordinary to see the servants bending to the ground, barely raising their faces in their salaams to their Sultan—almost as if they dare not look upon so exalted a being. Finally, a funny old woman fetched us, and off we went, down curious passages, between hedges made of bamboo, to the two or three little tukls (or straw huts, like cornstacks in England) each one of which belonged to a wife. We saw three of these wives. They were all quite different—different ages, different types, one might have thought from different countries—though all seemed to have but one occupation, and that was burning stencilled patterns on enormous white or yellow gourds, a couple of which we were given, with many respectful bows, in remembrance of our visit, a pretty thought and much appreciated.

One woman was really beautiful. She was tall and well-made, and rose from her cushions on the floor with great dignity and chanted a weird song for our entertainment. Her life was spent in a tukl the size of a large round dining-room table, and her only outing was across the compound to grind her coffee, or bake bread, or fetch water. Her clothes were of gorgeous hue, and her eyes were soft, and sad and gentle. She was really a very striking personality, but of education she knew nought.

No country ever progresses till its women cease to be slaves. Man has been misnamed the stronger

sex because he is not afraid of a mouse—a delightful form of fear he adores in the so-called weaker sex.

The Sultan of Myerno and his whole tribe are Mohammedans. They come from near Sokota, in British Nigeria. About fifteen years ago the party started on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and after a journey of three whole years they reached Sennar. There they have stopped for the last twelve years. They live by cultivating maize (*dura*) during the rains. Some of them now work at the Dam and others in the forest cutting timber. They are good workmen and welcome inhabitants, though no doubt they intend to continue their journey to Mecca some day, and eventually return to Nigeria. No one hurries in Eastern lands.

Our exit from Myerno was far grander than our entrance, for the whole village had heard that the Sultan was entertaining British guests. He walked with us himself as far as the edge of the cliff, salaamed and bowed, and wished us God-speed, sending the whole of his retinue down to the modern petrol-launch to help us in, while he himself waved and salaamed from the top. There must have been two or three hundred naked black people watching us when we left, many of them even rushed into the water to grin and shriek and dance enthusiastically, much to our horror, for we had seen thirteen crocodiles just before landing at Myerno, and we saw even more before arriving back at Sennar half an hour later.

The Macwar (Sennar) Dam is truly a great undertaking, and it bids fair to bring a great return.

I really do not know what we should have done

but for the kindness of Mr. Blagden, and Mr. Gordon Erock Bridgman of the Public Works Department in Khartoum. He is a brilliant young architect, knows the Sudan from end to end and took infinite trouble to arrange our trip.

When we were talking of going up the Blue Nile, we wondered how it would be possible to get across to the White Nile to continue our journey into the interior.

"That's all right," he said, "there is a little train from Sennar on the Blue Nile to Kosti on the White Nile, but you will have to stay three days at Kosti to pick up the steamer."

"Is there an hotel at Kosti?" I asked.

"Hotel!" and he laughed. "No; there is certainly no hotel, you must stay with 'Eddy.'"

"But how do you know 'Eddy' will wish us to stay with him?"

"Oh, that's all right, 'Eddy' will be delighted," he replied. "It will be quite a new experience for him to have lady visitors, so we will arrange for you to stay with 'Eddy.'"

"But we really cannot go and stay with somebody we don't know for three whole days. He may hate us."

"Oh yes, you can. He will be delighted to put you up for as long as you like; he is just a lone man, and you can wait there until the boat arrives."

And so it was arranged in this happy-go-lucky fashion that we should go to "Eddy." He did not appear to have any other name, but he seemed to be pretty well-known by everybody.

Our last night at Sennar, the kindly engineers

gave us a dinner party at Mr. East's bungalow. We were eleven men and three women, and, as nearly all the men were bachelors, I insisted on drinking to "the health of their future brides." Such a bundle of charming old bachelors is seldom found; in fact, one has to go into these wild parts to realize the loneliness of men's lives away from civilization.

It was a charming little dinner. Mr. P. H. East, Mr. and Mrs. Macrae, Mr. O. L. Proud, Mr. Perry and others. Nothing of the wilds about that dinner. Electric light and pretty lampshades; mats upon the table; good glass and linen, and everything most comfortable; and about midnight we changed from festive garb to travelling clothes and were driven off to the station seven miles away.

When the train arrived, it was all dark; there were no lights on board, but as the moon was shining divinely overhead, that did not matter very much, and we got into a funny little leather-lined compartment and settled ourselves down till six a.m. at which hour we were supposed to arrive at Kosti.

After hauling out our pillows, getting rid of hats and shoes, we stretched ourselves out on either side of the carriage. It seemed but a short time when the door opened and a grinning Arab stood in the aperture calling:

"TEEKETTS!"

Up I got to find the tickets in my suit-case, although it was too dark for the man really to see whether the tickets were right or not, and as we

were the only first-class passengers in this extraordinary little train, and had been seen off by all the officials in Sennar, it seemed hardly necessary for him to demand the tickets.

Dozing off to sleep, it appeared but a short time when the word :

" TEEKETTS " rang forth again. There stood this black man in the dusk with his eyes shining white, and his teeth still whiter, looking absolutely ghostly and calling forth :

" TEEKETTS."

" Go away ! " I said. " I have shown you the Teeketts ! " but nothing would persuade him to move.

" Go away," I said ; but as he understood my language no more than I understood his, he only grinned, repeating :

" TEEKETTS ! "

Up I got again, for I felt he could murder me if he liked, and showed him the Teeketts.

For the third time I turned over and went to sleep. When this wretched man appeared again, calling : " TEEKETTS ! TEEKETTS ! " I shook my head at him, waved him to begone, but no ! he would have none of it.

" TEEKETTS ! TEEKETTS ! " he persisted.

" Go away ! " I again repeated, utterly exasperated at his persistency, and then pulling my skirt violently, his eyes dilating with excitement :

" KOS-TI," he said, " KOS-TI ! "

What could the man mean ? It was still pitch dark, not even the early dawn of six o'clock, the hour at which we were supposed to arrive at Kos-ti,

but the good man was determined I should not lie there, so he pulled more violently at my skirt, and reiterated: "KOS-TI! TEEKETTS!! TEEKETTS! KOS-TI!!"

There was no doubt about it he was very agitated about something, so all I could do was to wake Mrs. Goodbody from her slumbers and say:

"This man seems to insinuate we are coming to Kosti." We both sat up. We still could see nothing. But we struggled into shoes and hats, and lo! the train pulled up in the desert.

"We have stopped," I said. "Where can we be?" and then noticing the shimmer of some hutments, I went to the end of the corridor to see if there was anyone there. A tall broad figure in white duck stood before me.

"I am Eddy," he said.

"Are you?" I replied. "But is this Kosti?"

"Yes! this is Kosti, and you are one hour too early. Delighted to see you—where are your bags?"

He seemed a cheery soul from what we could see of him, and a minute later, bag and baggage, we were tumbling out of the train on to the sand below.

"I have brought your guard," he said.

"Guard! What guard?"

"Your guard for the luggage."

What could this man mean?

"Have you got the ice?" he inquired.

"Ice!" I replied, thinking that this man Eddy must be a lunatic.

"Because I have brought Henry along."

So he was not a lone man, after all, if he had a companion.

Things were becoming more and more unintelligible. The sand of the desert must have affected Eddy's head, and I was still sleepy and stupid from the few hours of supposed rest on the hard seats of a railway carriage, interwoven with calls for TEEKETTS.

Almost as we talked, the day dawned, and there stood a dozen black and hideous men; men from the prison who had come to carry the luggage, for porters there were none in such a place as this. These creatures were the guard.

Eddy persisted about the ice, and as we were hundreds of miles from anywhere in a tropical land, it seemed a preposterous supposition that I could have any ice about me, but Eddy was right and I was wrong. This kind soul, knowing English women would feel the heat, had communicated with Khartoum to send 150 kilos of ice down in three huge ice chests, and as they had had to come this circuitous route, and been put into our train, we actually had brought 150 kilos of ice along with us for use at the bungalow.

That was only one of his kindnesses; the others are too many to mention, for a more charming host, or a more thoughtful one, never existed than this Sudanese Civil servant, himself a well-known Oxford blue.

"Henry" was a Ford car into which we jumped and bumped over the sand until we saw two bungalows standing among the oleander trees, ten or twelve feet high, in full bloom, the one belonging

to the Railway Manager being still in darkness, but the one where we were to stay being ablaze with light, for on the veranda charming Japanese lanterns were all twinkling; in fact it looked as if the place had been got ready for a ball; hot coffee, champagne, whisky, plum cake, eggs and bacon; in fact every sort of luxury was waiting our arrival, to say nothing of a bottle of scent for each of us, and a box of chocolates.

This man ruled over a vast district. He spent several weeks at a time in the town of Kosti, with its ten or fifteen thousand natives; then he went out on trek over the desert, riding a splendid white camel, followed by his servants, his tent and his food, only to return again to his solitary grandeur at the bungalow. And with all, he had a grand piano which he laughingly said kept him from drink—and a man comes once a year, all the way from Khartoum, to overhaul it.

One morning we persuaded him to let us go down to the Court House.

"Certainly, you shall go," he said, "if you promise not to laugh."

We looked surprised.

"I mean it," he said. "We take our court proceedings very solemnly. These Sudanese think a great deal of the Court House, and as the performance will be somewhat strange to you, I am only warning you that you must not laugh."

We swore that no powers on earth would make us smile, and accordingly, "Henry" conveyed us at 7 a.m. to the Court. It was quite interesting; at a table sat Eddy, behind him at small tables

sat various native clerks who, like himself, knew both Arabic and English. In front of him, squatting on the floor, were about twenty white calicoed natives. Each one of these had come to hear the law; each one had paid the sum of about one shilling to receive a large documentary paper with all the details of his case. This paper, to them, is worth far more than its weight in gold, for they can take it back to their village and show where they have been and what they have done.

A hundred more men were waiting outside, one and all of whom would come in in turn.

Naturally the proceedings were in a language we did not understand, but Eddy seemed mighty efficient, and after he had tried and settled a few cases, signed and sealed the documents, he explained to these people that we were very important ladies from Great Britain, and in an undertone he said:

"Do you mind shaking hands with these big sheikhs, they would be most awfully pleased."

"Certainly," I replied, and so solemnly we shook hands with the whole lot.

And the cases were nearly always the same. Some man had stolen some other man's water by turning the irrigation drain. That, of course, is one of the most serious things that can happen in a sunbaked land.

Some man had stolen some other man's daughter, or his wife, or his sister; another serious offence.

Some man had driven some other man's cattle, and so on ad lib. These men come for hundreds of miles to have their cases settled by the white

man, and whatever he says they will abide by his decision. That is where the Britisher comes in.

Every Sudanese I ever met, praised Great Britain, boldly announced they hated the Egyptians, and they only wished the British flag to fly in Sudan.

At home one wondered for years where all our golden sovereigns disappeared to. Shiploads went to America of course, to pay for a large portion of the Allies' purchases; but we were always meeting our own golden sovereigns in Syria, Palestine and the Sudan. It was a curious anomaly, and the reason was still more curious; but we will leave that at present.

There were thousands of them at Kosti.

Life in the Orient is made up of surprises.

We never should have thought of going so far up the Nile, or to Sennar, had Sir Murdoch Macdonald, the engineer of Assouan, and then the engineer of Sennar, not made out the plans and kindly smoothed the difficulties for the Blue Nile.

Since those days Lord Cowdray's firm has taken over the work for the Sudan Government.

Sir Edgar Burnard, the Finance Secretary to the Sudan, was another old and kindly friend who helped arrange the White Nile trip. One wants friends always in life, they oil the wheels, but one wants them doubly in the wilds, for it is people who know a place and those only who can advise the home-bird turned into a nomad.

Little did I dream in life that I should make the personal acquaintance of so many hippopotami. There are dozens and dozens in Southern

Sudan, and the funny part is that when these black monsters lie on the top of the water asleep or pop up to have a look at a boat, they don't look black at all, but in the brilliant sunshine they look a brilliant pink.

They are clever beasts, and as they do not care to spend all their time upon the bank, and, unlike human beings, have no perambulators in which to sit their babies, they have taught their babies to sit on the top of their own heads, and consequently one can see mamma hippopotamus submerged in the water all but her head on the top of which an infant hippopotamus is holding on or balancing itself in some wonderful way.

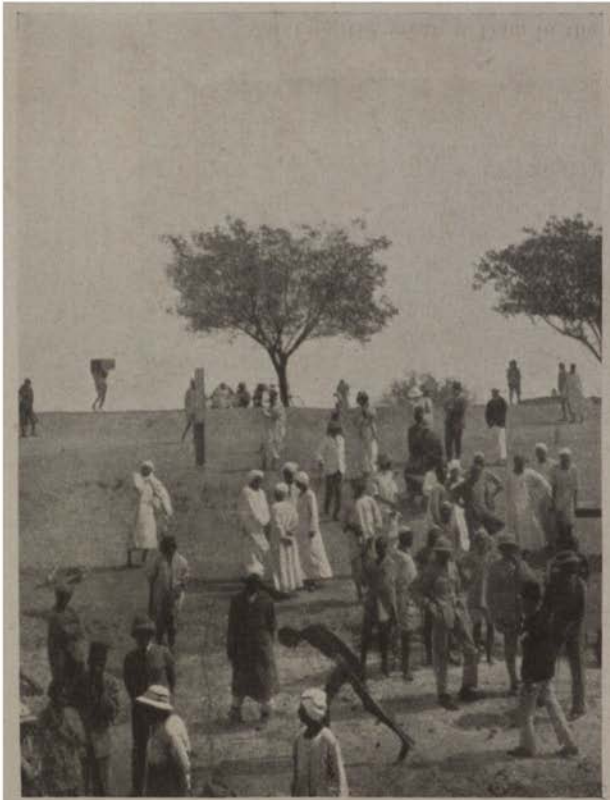
Towards evening nearly every civil servant in the East goes out to shoot his dinner. He begins his day early and he ends it before the sun goes down. That is the time for tennis, polo, and all forms of recreation, and I can picture now one beautiful evening at Kosti, when we crossed the Nile in a huge barge, making tea from a tea-basket while the men rowed or struggled with the sail, and as we landed among the high reeds on the opposite bank, we noticed the trail of the hippopotami.

My host was more intent upon duck for dinner than upon the hippo, so he and my sister marched off, he to replenish, and she to peep between the reeds for a resting hippopotamus. Naturally I took to my usual vocation and sat myself down to daub.

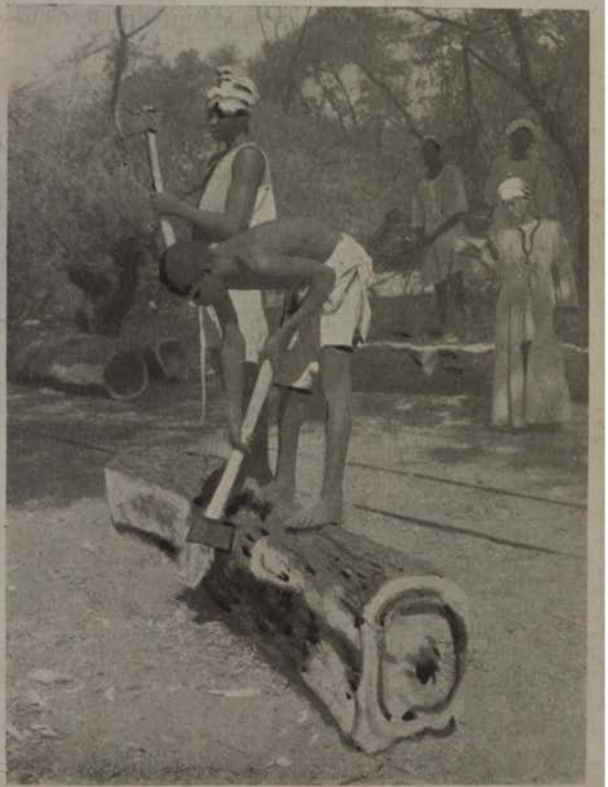
It was a wonderful evening. As one goes south in these parts the sky becomes more and more

Making the greatest Dam in the world—Sennar, on the Blue Nile, Sudan.

[*To face p.* 302.



Fashoda, on the White Nile, now called Kodok.



Cutting wood, Erredeba Forest, Blue Nile, Sudan.

From photos by the Author.

heliotrope until one arrived in the Southern Sudan to find it positively plum colour.

That night, as I plied a brush (for a pencil I knew not), it was to the accompaniment of the song of the whistling teal. These whistling teal are really very interesting. They rise at sundown, they spread out like a great pointed V, and as they poise overhead they whistle distinctly in a strange and curious key which is very fascinating. Barely had one flight passed overhead than another followed.

When the whistling teal ceased for a moment, great flights of pink or red storks took the wing.

CHAPTER XVII

WHAT WILL THE END OF OUR JAUNT BE?

WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

AH, that is the question. It is about so much that the skein of events is one huge tangle. And God alone knows what the result may be. A settlement to-day means no settlement to-morrow. Keep that in mind. One thing is pretty certain, the Bolshevists are playing an important part in this Near Eastern crisis.

And who are the Bolshevists?

There again is a tangled question. The anti-Jews say they are Jews. The anti-Socialists ally them to Socialism, or Syndicalism, or Revolution or what you will. Anyway, the Bolshevists have pulled down Russia, and have built up nothing.

There is undoubtedly an alliance between the Soviet Government of Moscow and the Angora Government, which is that of Kemal and his Nationalist Turks, and if report be true there is even a stronger alliance with Germany.

There lies the rub. What is Kemal? Is he simply a Nationalist Turk just fighting for his own country, or is he a Bolshevist in disguise?

If the former, he can be reckoned with; if the latter, he has a vast power behind him.

What will the End of our Jaunt be?

Naturally the Turks want to get back what they have lost; that is human nature. They lost Syria, Palestine, Constantinople, Chanak and some of the neutral zones and the Balkans, and they are seeking and will seek to get them back.

The Bolshevist element in the Turkish Army may be stronger to-day than the purely Nationalist element, and if that is so, Kemal's influence may be swamped, even though he himself is purely of Nationalist convictions. The whole question is if—if—if?

But paramount is the query: Do we intend to have the Turk back in Europe or not? I am not talking about to-day, I am talking about to-morrow, and the other to-morrows.

The whole Mohammedan world is waiting for the answer, ready to rush to the Green banner. They thought little of the Caliph at Constantinople until the Great War, when his name was brought so persistently forward for propaganda purposes, that he became a sort of mythical deity to the Moslem, and now he is their Christ, their God, their Pope in one.

Neither Peace nor War can settle this question of the Turk in Europe for all time. The breach can only be temporarily healed by goodwill.

This Moscow power of Soviet plotters is now busily engaged in Peking, rushing out propaganda all over China. China, be it remembered, is on one side of Russia and Germany is on the other. And we know Germany and Angora are friends. Well?

A consolidated Europe is absolutely essential.

Great Britain and France must be banded together, as they are both part rulers of the peoples of Islam. Religion is an enormous factor, and Christian versus Moslem is a huge proposition. We really seem to be going back to the Middle Ages.

Undoubtedly the greatest bond of all bonds of union is that of a common religion. That is why Mohammedans all over the world are so interested in the position of the Turk, who, like themselves, is an Oriental, worshipping the same Prophet. Nothing would be more terrible than for the Moslem world to turn against its Christian brothers.

Are there not seventy millions of Mohammedans in India? That is only a fraction of its peoples, and yet it is double the population of Great Britain. Right away from India to Constantinople is roughly Mohammedan. From the north of Persia to Central Africa is roughly Mohammedan. Think what it would mean if all these peoples joined together against the Christian. And always keep your eye on Mosul, a town far from the beaten track, but one of the most important danger spots at the moment.

We must work hand in hand with India and Egypt.

India must take her place alongside the Dominions as a partner in the British Empire.

Turkish lands hide oil. Well—everyone wants the oil. The treaty of Angora between the French and Turks gave the Standard Oil a hold on oil. Well?

As the Turk advances into Europe he stirs up

the Bulgarian, who is a first-class fighter, imbued with the spirit of discipline and with no imagination. Again the Balkans.

The Bosphorus-Dardanelles sea route is a natural barrier to separate the Moslem Turk from the Christian Greek. It separates Europe from Asia.

The Caspian-Black Sea route has a length of about 1,000 miles, with the Caucasus as a sort of neutral mountain background. Here is the Bolshevik stronghold to-day.

The third important route from the Baltic in the north to the Black Sea covers the lands of Latvia, Esthonia, Rumania and Poland, all of which are near Germany on the one side, and Russia on the other.

Do you realize the importance of compromise and peace from the Black Sea to the Baltic?

I have seen the ravages of war. Those battlefields of France and Flanders with the dead barely buried; all the debris of battle lying about. My son sleeping beneath a small wooden cross.

Yes, I've seen it. I know. For God's sake, let us pause before we repeat such destruction.

If we had sat down at once in 1919 and made a workable Peace with the Turks, all this trouble of 1922 would have been saved, but in 1919 we were still flirting with them and still talking about the belated Peace. So it is hardly to be wondered at that they got impatient of delay, and as the Allies did nothing, they took the matter into their own hands and organized themselves into an Army. That was human nature.

Few people can stand success successfully. And

so with nations. The Greek won for a spell. It turned his head. Then the Turk overthrew him and marched towards Constantinople. Success turned his head. He overturned the first beginnings that were being made towards peace.

It is true the Sultan of Turkey no longer reigns in Syria, Palestine or Mesopotamia, but he reigns in the hearts of the people.

To-day the Oriental is confronting the Westerner, stronger in numbers, but the poorer in education, because the Eastern woman is practically ruled out. She cannot teach her own sons.

Once on a time the whole of Christian Europe would have risen at the destruction of Smyrna by the Moslem Turk. To-day Great Britain alone protested and sat tight at Chanak, preferring to act alone when France and Italy, her Allies, withdrew.

If one looks back on history, one finds what an enormous influence religion has always had in war. Hostilities constantly have become Holy War. A strange name for the shedding of blood, truly. But then men—aye, and women more so—are fanatical about religion. Warriors for the Cross have travelled thousands of miles to fight, to wit the Crusaders, and some of the greatest of wars have been in the Middle East or near by.

You and I don't want to probe deeply into history here. Guide books and history volumes are not for us; but we cannot jaunt far without realizing that the days of Holy Wars are not over. They are just beginning again. You may well shudder; but if you have travelled so far with me you must have noticed the religious unrest everywhere.

What will the End of our Jaunt be?

Hindus and Moslems hated one another, but actually joined together to fight the Christian Britisher. Hindus and Moslems have never loved one another, and again they have fallen apart. The Hartal (suspension of business) was organized in India that the true believer might mourn for the fate of Turkey and the Caliphate. That very agitation hints at Holy War (Jihad), does it not?

Turks and Greeks—again of different religions —have been at one another's throats.

Arabs and Jews are constantly shedding one another's blood. Down in the far Sudan religious feuds are qu'te common.

Armenians and Bulgarians are always at strife. If you think for a moment, you will see everywhere that the religious question predominates.

Religion is the only thing likely ever to pull Russia together. They have strayed far from their Greek Church to Bolshevism, but never have I seen more devout people than in Russia. A few years ago the churches were crowded with men and women at prayer, and devout prayer, too. All that has passed, and chaos has taken its place, theologically, legally, socially. Only the resuscitated Church they formerly revered and worshipped will ever restore peace and prosperity in Russia, methinks. The moujik is an uneducated child, who loves to pray at his mother's knee. He is full of sentiment, and empty of education.

Russia is largely under German influence to-day. That is no new alliance. One must never forget that German and Russian friendship under Bismarck.

The ex-Kaiser's first call after his accession to the Imperial throne was to St. Petersburg, much to the annoyance of Queen Victoria. There is a close understanding between Berlin and Moscow, and there is an alliance between Moscow and Angora.

In a way, any Turkish victory is victory for Germany.

War with the Turk would be insufferably harmful to Great Britain. He must be our friend and not our foe. He is a Moslem; our Empire is largely Moslem, and if we go to war—now or later—with Kemal, we shall have the whole Moslem world against us, and the Russian Soviet will claim Kemal.

Arthur Rosenberg, a Bolshevist writer, says (October, 1922):

"In Egypt, as well as in Palestine and Mesopotamia, the opposition against England is growing. In India, after a long period of apathy, a new uprising of the revolutionary movement is noticeable in the last few weeks. . . . The National movement of the Orientals bids fair to erase the lines of Sèvres. The lines of Versailles will likewise fade when the resistance of the bartered proletarian masses of Central Europe sets in with full force."

Is Bolshevism out to overthrow all Governments? It aims at that end.

If Gorki is to be believed, the simple Russian peasant is to-day a monster of primitively cunning brutality. He calls the Russian people, semi-savages. Is this the result of the moujik overthrow

of the monarchy, one asks? The moujik as I knew him was certainly not as Gorki pictures him; he was of blessed simplicity and faith.

What is the secret hand at work at our own doors in Ireland, the Near East, Egypt and India?

Karl Marx was a German Jew who worked for class war and communism. Does the Bolshevism which seized Russia in 1917 go further? Bolshevists had no wish to help Turkey. They merely sought through helping her to get her to attack Europe and the Balkans—anything to destroy European Government and solidity.

Bolshevist Russia and Germany, Turks and Moslems may join together, and if they do they will threaten the downfall of civilization and a war of race and creed which may annihilate half the world.

And where is Peace?

Those sun-caressed lands of the East are under the blackest thunder clouds. May wisdom arise and bring peace and goodwill to men.

The greatest thing to avoid is a Holy War. That is a fork with two prongs: the devilment of war and the fanaticism of faith. Folk stick at nothing. Murder becomes sacred.

Many Arabs would prefer the Turks back in Palestine rather than the Jews—who, by the by, dislike being called Jews, and prefer to be referred to as Israelites. There were, of course, troubles between the Turks and the Arabs, but they were nothing in comparison with the troubles between the Arabs and the new Jews. Nine-tenths of the Palestinians have boycotted their government's

attempt to thrust Zionism upon them under a new constitution.

Of course, we must remain faithful to Islam. That is inevitable, and some form of bromide must be administered which will pacify its far-spreading religionists or a vast portion of the world will go madly and religiously drunk.

Again, we must remain allied with France. She is our nearest neighbour. We must remain friendly with the United States. She speaks our language and her people are largely of our own blood.

And even then, when these three factors are allied to us, or we are allied to them, whichever way you may wish to put it, Holy War may not be impossible. Without these alliances, Holy War is inevitable.

Race hatred is terrible. I had no idea that such hatred existed till I went from Italy by Greece, Cilicia, Syria and Palestine to Egypt. Every nation, every language came across my path, and each poured out words of distrust and often of positive hatred of the other—Armenian Christian refugees, Russians of the orthodox Greek Church, German and Austrian merchants, Cheko-Slavs, French soldiers, Greek bankers, Syrian Mohammedans, all hating one another.

At the roughest glance :

In India the Mohammedans and Hindus are only friends when they combine in a common cause against the white man.

In Palestine Mohammedans and Jews are constantly at one another's throats. In Syria the

Mohammedan hates the Roman Catholic under whom he sits. The Turk is a Mohammedan fanatic. The Egyptian is either without religion, or is a devout Moslem. The Arabs are mostly of one religion, but of many races. As tribes and as religious devotees they are constantly at strife. The Russian is irreligious to-day, but within him is a latent germ of strong orthodox Greek Church Christianity. Once stir up all these religions, and war ensues.

Leave them alone, for they must work out their own salvation, or their own extermination.

Why should we police half the world? For that is what our task amounts to. Why should we have to foot the bill? Great Britain is more heavily taxed than any other country to-day, and it is largely because we have become the universal policeman.

What will be the end of it all? That is a stupendous question which neither you nor I can answer at the moment.

We have travelled together since the Armistice through scenes ostensibly out of the war, practically in the war, and now back into another war. To say that peace has reigned in the Middle East since the Treaty is sheer humbug. There has never been one moment's peace. Discontent in many instances has been but growing.

The great German war brought about a great Empire rally. Instead of Prussia dis-uniting Great Britain and her Colonies and Dominions, it united and forged the links stronger than ever before.

Surely the recurrence of Armistice Day should forge even stronger the links in that chain? The British flag should wave everywhere, and one and all of us should be proud to be even a small unit in our wonderful brotherhood, over which a Royal King rules both humanely and wisely. Like so many others, I lost a dear son, and although I feel sad, that sadness is mingled with reverence on Armistice Day and increased loyalty to our wonderful Empire. Having travelled far, from personal experience I can vouch for the marvellous things Britishers have done all over the world. A race to be proud of.

Let us rally round the flag, and reverently join hands to help the future, in remembrance of those who have fallen to uphold our ideals in the past.

But we have to do more than this if the peace of the world is to be firmly established, and I am sorry to say that my wanderings have only made me feel certain that unless some stupendous effort is made by the nations of the world to insist on peace, whether through the League of Nations or otherwise, war and nothing but war will continue. Somewhere else in these pages it was suggested that war was often the outcome of over population. This is particularly so in the Middle East, because up to now the agricultural product of the land has not been sufficient to feed the rapidly multiplying population of those warmer climes. And as for ourselves, we could not exist for a month on what we grow in these islands, while Australia and Canada are crying out for population.

Let us get busy with emigration at once, and stop doles and their demoralization.

The only way to get a cleaner and a better world is to reduce its population and to teach the wanted children—the healthy children the people themselves can afford and wish to have and bring up—to teach those children more concisely the difference between right and wrong; the degradation of receiving pay for work they have not given; the necessity of being patriotic to the flag under which they are reared; to be, in fact, good and able citizens. All this pulling down, all this socialism, all this unrest is gnawing at the very foundation of the world, the very vitals of Life.

This world must be reconstructed on a solid and sure foundation. Without it there can be no Peace.

I had seen fifty-one Armenian women nursing babies aboard a small ship, and hardly any children among that packed company between one year and ten. What does that mean?

Women bear the sickness of a year, give the child life and love for a spell, and then it dies from want of food, disease and exposure.

Is that fair on women? An outraged girl of fourteen with a six months' sickly babe. What can one expect from such children?

Revolutionists are generally grown up bodily, but are the mentally warped, unwanted children. Poor women, panic stricken at another year of ill health, another mouth to feed, another child to wash and dress, are not in a proper frame of mind to have children; therefore, instead of happy infants being born to them, miserable, mentally

deficient, physically unfit or morally tainted babies are thrust into the world. They are not wanted, they are not happy, and they become revolutionists. One great factor to save the world is the improvement of wanted babies and the control of unwanted ones.

Involuntary motherhood and diseased fathers are the root of much socialism.

Believe me, over population and under food production constitute the very root of war. Real friendship must be forged in Europe if the life of nations is not to remain a game of chance. Once the East taught the West, now the West must lead the East, but vacillation won't do it; procrastination won't do it; strength of men and women and character alone can help rebuild the world.

And so this war may end. Christmas 1922 may close with peace and goodwill on earth, but much as I hate to say it, much as I hate to think it, that peace cannot continue unless some prodigious effort is made to make it do so.

War and all its horrors do not seem to have stayed the hand of strife. It is no good blinding one's eyes to the fact that some miracle has got to happen if the world is going to settle itself down to peace and prosperity.

These pages are mostly East; just the jottings from the memory of a woman traveller who is perfectly convinced that things are not right even when they outwardly seem so, and up to now they do not even outwardly seem so; that not only must each individual work for the peace and goodwill of the world, but that governments must be

composed of men and women who are experts in the subjects under discussion, and will throw their whole heart and soul into those discussions without looking for reward in individual emolument, improved position or titles.

* * * * *

We have seen together the political unrest of Egypt; the Egyptians' desire to upset the Sudan; the dislike of the French in Syria; the hatred of the Jew in Palestine and the lessening of British prestige; the unrest of the agitator in India, and the religious quarrels between Hebrew and Moslem.

We have seen how the Greek was hated in Salonica, in some of the islands and in Smyrna.

We have walked with the heterogeneous population of Constantinople, and seen tens of thousands of the Allies' Turkish prisoners waiting to be let free, a freedom they immediately enjoyed by joining the Kemalist army, officered now by Germans, if report be true.

We have seen British prestige declining everywhere, owing to want of policy and a strong hand. One can only rule by governing.

These pages have merely been a chat on what I saw. What do you glean from them?

Is the war in the Middle East over, is a Holy War now simmering? What will be the end of it all?

And this pen-woman and you, reader-friend, have seen hundreds and thousands—yes, some

hundreds of thousands—of graves of British men who fell in the Great War. What do you feel about it? Do you like all this bungling, this want of policy, this want of cohesion, or will you help all you can such organizations as the League of Nations, or Boy and Girl Scouts, do anything and everything you can to fight socialism, expand patriotism, and bring about a cleaner, saner world?

This present upheaval may come to nothing. But what about another and much worse war in five years time? Financiers juggle with gold. Religions juggle with gods, false or otherwise. Nations suffer. Strife outsteps strife. Ambition kicks ambition. Starvation clamours for food. War ensues, and the world's civilization may crumble to ashes; and a world remain of maimed men, overnumbering women, and unwanted, uncared for children.

May some power awaken the inner religion of the heart.

Oh God, let us have peace.

* * * * *

Our jaunt is over, and you, reader and friend, have been a good portion of the fifty thousand miles with me. If you are not too heartily sick of the trip, we must take another together. In the meantime the book is finished and in your hands, and I have painted my last picture in England, though you will

never guess what this stupendous work of art has been.

Versatility is recreation; a holiday is merely a holiday because it is change of work, but in case you are curious, let me own the last great artistic effort has been to repaint an old hat black. With that upon my head, I take my adieu.

NOTE.

As this proof goes to press, for the last time one can only summarize the situation in the Near East, round which so many of these chapters hang, by saying that for the moment the war is finished (November, 1922).

General Harington has triumphed; the Allied terms have been accepted, and having said that, one shudders to think of the Allies' degradation in accepting the terms foisted upon them by the very people they turned out of Europe with much bloodshed. They have allowed the Turk to return to Europe's shores.

Did Great Britain wink at the Greek advance a few months before, merely to keep the Turkish Army busy on the west instead of round Mosul? One wonders.

But there will be much more wondering before long, for there are many surprises in store for the West as the outcome of this ridiculous eulogy on peace in the Middle East.

There is no peace whatever in the Middle East or the East itself, nor under present conditions is peace possible. Some stupendous effort of

governing wisely and well must be found—both East and West—or civilization goes under. Complete political and economic unity are vital. Much thinking, gentle handling and, withal, firmness are required.*

* * * * *

So the Turks are back in Europe.
What will the end be ?

* By the Mudania Agreement, signed 11th October, 1922, the Allies decided to "hand over Eastern Thrace and Adrianople to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey." The Greek troops to retire behind the bank of the Maritza river. The Allied troops to guard the railway junction for Adrianople. The Turks to send a guard of 8,000 into Eastern Thrace. (Thrace covers about one thousand square miles of Europe.) As regards neutral zones, those of Constantinople and Gallipoli remain unchanged. On the Chanak side the neutral zone is, in future, only to extend about ten miles from the coast.

THE END.

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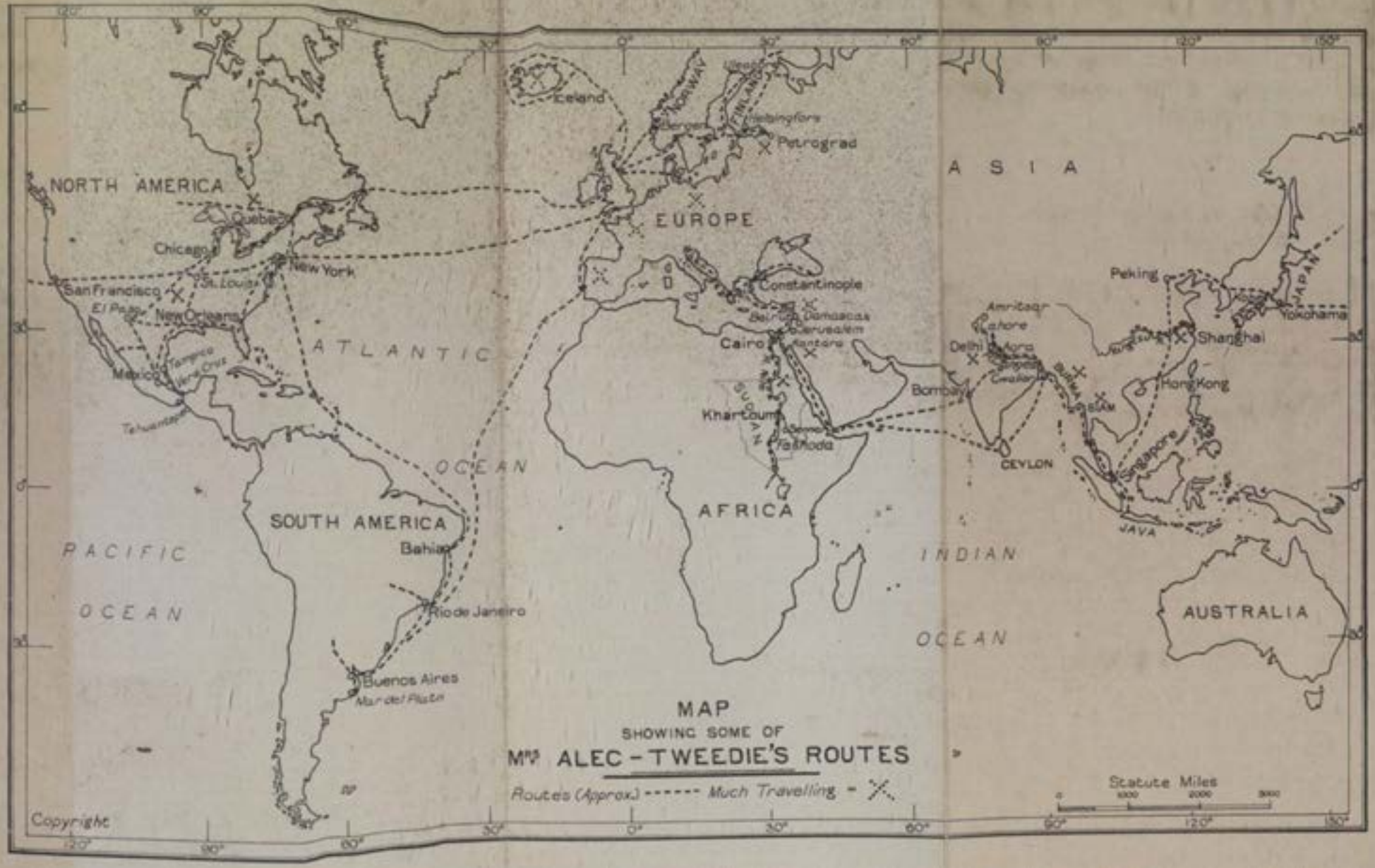
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